Confessions of a Potterite:

Adventures with Harry Potter

An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

By

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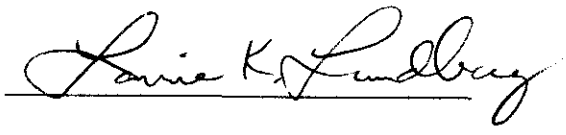

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Abstract

Many texts exist that dwell upon the origins and meanings of the Harry Potter phenomenon, termed so because of the continued publishing successes of the series. Most of J.K. Rowling's critics agree that the tremendous success of the books challenge traditional conceptions of children's literature, publishing, and for some the very definition of a "good" book. Of the hundreds of articles and books that approach this topic, a majority place the blame for the phenomenon on the public and social functions of novels, defined by Ronald Peacock as "the sense that literature enshrines a vast total of thought, feeling, and experience gathered through the centuries since literary creation began and which is available in a certain measure, partially rather than completely, to everyone" (14). This belief has spawned the creation of numerous books that discuss the mythological influences on J.K. Rowling's writing, such as Allan and Elizabeth Kronzek's *The Sorcerer's Companion: a Guide to the Magical World of Harry Potter*. However, Peacock also describes "an individual, personal function" of literature that exists "because it can be selectively treated by individuals and assimilated to the process of their own though, sensibility, and spiritual character" (14). It is this function that interests me, and what I ultimately believe is the secret behind the Harry Potter phenomenon. To this effect, I have included in this project a short reading-response log. In this journal I have recorded my thoughts and responses to the Harry Potter books and the critical essays regarding them. The second part of the project includes an essay exploring my perspective on the success of the Harry Potter series. The last section of the project consists of two addenda. Appendix A is a list for further reading on the topic, while Appendix B includes copies of selected articles.

Acknowledgements

This project is inspired by the creativity of J.K. Rowling in the creation of a series unlike any other. Only recently are her talents being given their well justified place beside authors such as Roald Dahl. I fully believe that, read with an open mind, anyone can find some enjoyment and laughter in her pages.

I also wish to thank the Bracken Library and its employees for their wonderful collection and fantastic Interlibrary Loan department. Without their assistance, this project would have died in its early stages. Lastly, I thank Laurie Lindberg for wonderful patience.

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MY TWO KNUTS WORTH

Journal Entry #1: Phenomenon

One of the most intriguing aspects of Rowling's novels is the phenomenon surrounding the books. Everywhere there is evidence of the ongoing war between the "Potterites," those who love the novels, and the "Muggles," those who deplore the books. As a Potterite, I have often wondered why the majority of readers find the books so magical, as well as why some do not. Having analyzed many arguments against the novels, I can come to only one conclusion: there are several reasons why a reader loves a text, and many of those reasons are highly personal. My readings of the text have led me to believe that it is J.K. Rowling's amazing talent of "retelling the familiar in an original way" (Eccleshair 8) that allows her novels to be enjoyed by people of all ages from a variety of backgrounds and nationalities.

We'll begin, like Harry, at his first trip on the Hogwarts Express in Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone. When Harry tells the Dursley's that he is to meet his train at Platform 9 ¾ at King's Cross Station, his family simply laughs at him without explaining what they find so funny. Being Muggles of the worst kind, the Dursley's *refuse* to suspend their disbelief, evidenced by their complete hatred of all things not normal. They will never understand the magic needed to reach the otherwise normal train. It is their loss, as all that is required is running faithfully into the brick wall between platforms 9 and 10.

The entrance to Platform 9 ¾ is a representation of the difficulties many critics have with the texts. Like the Dursleys, they do not want to believe. Instead, they analyze the wall from every possible angle, prod the bricks one by one, and proclaim it impossible. The critics conclude that the novels are poorly written and of shoddy workmanship, because these people do not know how to reach the magic behind the closed door. The key to understanding the

popularity, the *magic*, behind the Harry Potter books is on Platform 9 ¾, and only by a leap—or a run—of faith can it be reached.

The entrance to the platform is only one of many boundaries that separate the wizard world from the Muggle world. These borders definitively represent the separation of reality and imagination. Similar devices are included in several famous novels, most notably the wardrobe in C.S. Lewis' Chronicles of Narnia. Kelly Noel-Smith describes how "each of the four books ends with the train journey back to London Kings Cross, passing the other way through the barrier back to fictional reality and Harry leaving the station with his step-parents to endure another Summer holiday with them and without magic" (200-1). The crossing of the barrier at Platform 9 ¾ represents the passage between "a description of real life (which, in Harry Potter's case, is grim) into one of magic (which represents life as we would like it to be)" (Noel-Smith 201).

Journal Entry #2: Humor

There are many reasons why a reader loves a text, and most of those reasons are highly personal. Some of the most loved books published in the last ten years are the *Harry Potter* series. Contemplated, the wide appeal of the pubescent wizard and his adventures is amazing. There are many articles and several books written on the phenomenon surrounding the series, and most conclude that, despite J. K. Rowling's sometimes mediocre or unoriginal writing, her books are able to reach such a vast audience because of certain *universal* characteristics. It is ironic that the very quality is being criticized is also the believed cause of the popularity of the books. Personally, my numerous readings of the text revealed an author who possesses the amazing talent of "retelling the familiar in an original way" (Eccleshair 8)—and who was probably a stand-up comedian in a former life.

The book More Reading Connections: Bringing Parents, Teachers, and Librarians Together includes a section describing the relationship between humor and children's literature:

> Humor helps children contend with stress by distorting or exaggerating reality. In the context of humor, children can view things that are stressful in nonthreatening and positive ways. Humor can also provide a release of tension. When children see conflict in a humorous story, they see characters working through things, and they realize that conflicts can be resolved in different ways. Humor alleviates anxiety . . . Humor facilitates creative thinking. It can be based on incongruity, making it necessary for children to validate the inconsistencies. It is often difficult to determine criteria for excellence in humorous children's books because of the differences between what adults and children view as funny." (Knowles 15)

For example, two of my favorite scenes involve Uncle Vernon in Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone:

> "Oh, these people's minds work in strange ways, Petunia, they're not like you and me," said Uncle Vernon, trying to knock in a nail with the piece of fruitcake Aunt Petunia had just brought him. . . .
>
> "No Post on Sundays," he reminded them cheerfully as he spread marmalade on his newspapers, "no damn letters today—"
>
> Something came whizzing down the chimney as he spoke and caught him sharply on the back of the head. (Sorcerer's Stone 41)

However, when I mention these incidents to my fellow Potterites, very few remember reading these lines. I personally did not pick up on Rowling's subtle humor until my second or third time through the novels. Many of her witticisms are so easily overlooked that they can be discovered only by rereading the texts. Rowling's sly humor is a vital component of the books because it transforms the initial two-dimensional text into a multidimensional world populated with characters solving difficult problems in ways that are "nonthreatening and positive" (Knowles 15) to the reader. Roni Natov describes this aspect of the novels in another way:

> Children need to see their feelings, particularly the darkest ones, reflected in their stories. Mitigating the darkness of the fairy tales takes away their power and reassures children that they are not alone in their fearful imaginings, that they are shared and can be addressed. (321)

It is because of her writing style that Rowling is able to announce the death of Harry Potter's parents so early in the first book. This is necessary to the plot of the novels in that it sets up the primary protagonist and antagonist for the entire series. Voldemort represents a complex

evil. As an antagonist in a "children's" book, Voldemort is exceptionally threatening. Rowling—so far—has left no trace of good in the character, as is exemplified by Professor McGonagall's incredulity upon discovering his disappearance in Chapter 1: "after all he's done...all the people he's killed...he couldn't kill a little boy?"(Sorcerer's Stone 12).

This, then, is the source of Harry's scar—and his fame. However, at the beginning of the book when we are first introduced to Harry, he has no clue about his past. The Muggle relatives in whom Headmaster Albus Dumbledore has placed Harry's care have hidden this dubious history from him in the hope that they would be able to "stamp out that dangerous nonsense" (Sorcerer's Stone 36). Besides being the worst of their kind—Professor McGonagall proclaims that "you couldn't find two people less like us" (Sorcerer's Stone 12)—the Dursley's play another relevant role in the texts: comic relief.

When analyzed, the level of fun poked at the Dursleys is shocking, although Rowling is always sure justify such attention. Their middle-class snobbery and materialism is used to set the humble Harry apart. Dudley is encouraged to equate material wealth with happiness, and readers are able to witness the poignant influence this has upon his life. When compared to Harry after he is admitted to Hogwarts, Dudley and his parents are the characters I feel the most pity for. According to Philip Nel, "[i]f the Durlsey's represent "the norm," then they illustrate the degree to which bourgeois values depend upon commodity culture. [They] have been warped by their excessive need to display their social status (48)." Natov puts it another way:

> The Harry Potter books satirize for children the superficiality of the world, its pretenses and human failure, the narcissism of popular culture, the stupidity and cruelty of the press, the rigidity and fraudulence embedded in our institutions, particularly the schools, framed by the unrelenting snobbery and elitism of our social world. (325)

In the *Goblet of Fire*, Harry tells Fred and George laughter is needed now more than ever as he invests all of his Tournament money in the twins' future joke shop—but only with the promise that they will buy Ron a new dress robe. Laughter is needed in our world as well. Harry Potter provides this laughter along with a safe environment in which to explore the problems of our society under the guise of the Wizard/Muggle world of the books.

Journal Entry #3: Characters and Relationships

Philip Nel states that the Harry Potter novels "are about Harry creating his own surrogate family composed of friends, teachers, and sympathetic adults. Lacking biological parents, he forges an alternative family structure" (47). Central in Harry's new family are his friends Hermione and Ron.

I was called the "smart chick" in high school by several of my classmates, just as Hermione is frequently referred to as the perfect student and a teacher's pet. In many ways, Hermione resembles a female version of Percy Weasley. However, unlike perfect prefect Percy, Hermione is a dynamic character. She struggles with her "smart chick" identity through all four of the Harry Potter books. Hermione is cautious by default and her natural inclination is to follow the rules diligently, while Harry and Ron are cast as the stereotypical adventurous males. Christine Schoefer addresses this issue in her article "Harry Potter's Girl Trouble":

> Halfway through the first book, when Harry rescues her with Ron's assistance, the hierarchy of power is established. We learn that Hermione's bookish knowledge only goes so far. . . . Like every Hollywood damsel in distress, Hermione depends on the resourcefulness of boys and repays them with her complicity.

Hermione does learn from her male counterparts, however. A main part of her growth in the series is her education of a different sort by her two friends. As the narrator points out, "Hermione had become a bit more relaxed about breaking rules since Harry and Ron had saved her from the mountain troll, and she was much nicer for it" (Sorcerer's Stone 181). Hermione's ultimate lesson, however, is revealed at the end of the first book just before Harry goes forth to face his nemesis, Voldemort:

Hermione's lip trembled, and she suddenly dashed at Harry and threw her arms around him.

"Hermione!"

"Harry—you're a great wizard, you know."

"I'm not as good as you," said Harry, very embarrassed, as she let go of him.

"Me!" said Hermione. "Books! And cleverness! There are more important things—friendship and bravery and—oh Harry—be *careful*!" (Sorcerer's Stone 286-7)

Indeed, the meaning and importance of both friendship and bravery provides a constant message throughout the plights of the Gryffindor friends. Without the help of his friends, including Hagrid, Dobby, and Dumbledore, Harry would not survive the challenges he faces in each book. Harry, Hermione, and Ron's placement in the Gryffindor House—"Where dwell the brave at heart" (Sorcerer's Stone 118)—signifies the bravery the trio must possess to overcome each book's ordeal and, at the end of the series, to fight the final battle with Voldemort.

At least, that is my assumption. As the seventh and final novel in the series will not be published for several years to come, I can only assume what the ultimate battle will be and who will be involved. So far, however, Harry's friendship with Hermione and especially Ron has played a large part in his success in the first three novels. The fourth pivotal novel isolates Harry for most of the text, perhaps signifying the fact that the final battle must be between Voldemort and him alone.

As a working-class woman, I absolutely love the Weasley family. Not only do they persevere through the financial strain of seven children, but Arthur and Molly Weasley are able to raise very successful children despite such a demanding situation: Bill, the oldest son, was headboy at Hogwarts and now works as a treasure hunter for Gringott's; Charlie was captain of

the Quidditch team and now works with dragons in Romania; and Percy becomes a Prefect, Headboy, and employee for the Ministry of Magic like his father.

Those still in school are successful in other ways, as the twins Fred and George are hilarious jokesters in the books—in addition to their talents on the Quidditch field. Ron is both a loyal friend to Harry and a superb chess player. Ginny by far has the most difficult position in the family, as she is the only female child. Although she mainly appears in the second book, Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets, Ginny does play an important role in the text—namely, as a victim and device of Tom Riddle, Voldemort's sixteen-year-old self.

While Ginny so far has remained an insignificant character, Fred, George, and Ron play vital roles in the plot. Fred and George, beyond making their friends and the reader laugh, are slowly brought to the forefront of the books when, at the end of Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire, Harry bestows upon them his ill-begotten reward:

> "Fred—George—wait a moment."
>
> The twins turned. Harry pulled open his trunk and drew out his Twiwizard winnings.
>
> "Take it," he said, and thrust the sack into George's hands.
>
> "What?" said Fred, looking flabbergasted.
>
> "Take it," Harry repeated firmly. "I don't want it."
>
> "You're mental," said George, trying to push it back at Harry.
>
> "No, I'm not," said Harry. "You take it, and get inventing. It's for the joke shop."
>
> "He *is* mental," Fred said in an almost awed voice.
>
> "Listen," said Harry firmly. "If you don't take it, I'm throwing it down the drain. I don't want it and I don't need it. But I could do with a few laughs. We could all do with a

> few laughs. I've got a feeling we're going to need them more than usual before long." (733)

Harry also instructs the twins to use some of the money to buy Ron a new set of dress robes. This condition is based upon the humiliation Ron feels about being poor. When Harry and he first meet on the Hogwarts Express, Ron explains how everything he owns is secondhand: "You never get anything new, either, with five brothers. I've got Bill's old robes, Charlie's old wand, and Percy's old rat" (Sorcerer's Stone 100). In the same scene Draco Malfoy uses Ron's second hand items as a source of ridicule as he explains how "all the Weasleys have red hair, freckles, and more children than they can afford" (108). However, Harry always responds with compassion to Ron's plight, as well as with guilt in regards to his own newly discovered wealth:

> Harry didn't think there was anything wrong with not being able to afford an owl. After all, he'd never had any money in his life until a month ago, and he told Ron so, all about having to wear Dudley's old clothes and never getting proper birthday presents. (Sorcerer's Stone 100)

Like Ron, Harry is—at least in the Muggle world—teased for being poor and for his castoff clothing. Like precocious Hermione, Harry is smart and talented, only his abilities are demonstrated on the Quidditch field and in his many encounters with Voldemort and his minions. However, some of the images included in the novels actually reinforce the traditional class system, an example being the elite Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. Even so, the books are popular with people of all classes, perhaps because, as George Orwell once stated, there is a "need for working class children to imagine themselves among the elite, and for the elite to maintain their privileges by indoctrinating impressionable readers with the conservative values the story promoted" (Nel 42). Nel also describes how "Rowling investigates the

prejudices that develop around racial and cultural differences not through social realism but through fantasy" (44).

Like his two best friends, Harry is both loyal and brave—a true Gryffindor. While it is apparent that Harry's social status is by far the most complex among the friends, the reason is not simply because he is "the boy who lived" (Sorcerer's Stone 1). It is the complex relationships between these three characters that leave a lasting impression. While Harry is obviously the main character, without the support of his friends and the many other people who help along the way, the story of Harry Potter would have ended in the Dark Forest in the Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone.

HARRY POTTER, SUPERSTAR!

Harry Potter, Superstar!

> *By now we're all used to heavy marketing campaigns for movies. But movies that actually feel like two-hour-plus marketing campaigns are a relatively new phenomena . . . Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets sells itself dutifully minute-by-minute. (Zacharek)*

At this very moment, adults and children all over the world are eagerly awaiting the release of the fifth book in J.K. Rowling's popular series. However, until Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix is released, these Potterites have plenty to distract them. Like Warner Bros. recent rendition of *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, businesses all over the world are cashing in on the *Harry Potter* phenomenon. In his book Barry Trotter and the Unauthorized Parody, Michael Gerber offers an illuminating example of the controversy surrounding the commercialization of the *Harry Potter* series by businesses like Warner Bros. The author writes with amazing perception about the cultural phenomenon:

> [Barry Trotter:] When you're reading the books, you provide the pictures. So not only do you tell yourself the story in a way that is meaningful . . . you also exercise your imagination while doing it. . . . So say I'm a kid who sees the movie, then picks up the books. Who's making the pictures then? The movie people! And since movies are a business—and a pretty cynical one at that—the pictures that they give you will be the blandest, most mainstream ones they can come up with. They'll put some market-researched, audience-tested, focus-grouped crap into your head—and call it Barry Trotter!

> [Phyllis, his secretary:] TV and movies are what people like today. Making it impossible for people to see this one movie won't change that. They'll just watch some other movie instead, and then there's *no* chance that they'll read the books. A lot more kids will pick up a copy if you let the movie happen. (168-9)

There is debate about the literary merit and commercial value of the *Harry Potter* among literary critics, as well. Jack Zipes discusses the same issues as Gerber in his book Sticks and Stones, and his censure is apparent. His belief that the popularity of the *Harry Potter* books is "driven by commodity consumption that at the same time sets the parameters of reading and aesthetic taste" (172) is shared by the newspaper The New York Times. The newspaper created a separate best-seller list for children's books when the fourth *Harry Potter* book was released back in 2000. This was done with the intent of preventing Goblet of Fire from joining the other three novels at the top of the nationally acclaimed New York Times Best-Seller Lists, and it sent the clear message that *Harry Potter* did not possess the literary merit necessary for the traditional list.

This incident illustrates the importance of the distinction between the books and the phenomenon itself. As demonstrated above, critics like the author Jack Zipes consider the phenomenal success of *Harry Potter* to be caused, not by the literary merits of the works, but the manipulation of the "culture industry" in countries such as the United States and the United Kingdom (Zipes x). The relationship between the popularity of the book and the literary critics' opinions of it seems to be inversed, meaning the higher the public opinion the lower the literary merit. Opinions of the *Harry Potter* books vary widely between the critics and the public, ranging from a "I felt they were formulaic and sexist" (Zipes 171) to "I was hooked, just like everyone else [by J. K. Rowling's] amazing imagination" (Scott and Shulman). In the end, most

academics and other professionals are still debating whether the popularity of the *Harry Potter* books is caused by any literary merit of the texts or simply the massive advertising strategies employed by the publishers and Warner Bros.

Many of these professionals agree, however, that there is some literary basis for the massive appeal *Harry Potter* holds for readers of all ages. As stated in the article *Harry Potter's Oedipal Issues*, "It follows that, the more common the phantasy [sic], the more popular the work of literature will be which allows us to engage with it, whether consciously or not" (Noel-Smith 199). This statement implies that there is an archetypal fantasy that J. K. Rowling is exploring in her texts. Noel-Smith describes how "each of the four books ends with the train journey back to London Kings Cross, passing the other way through the barrier back to fictional reality and Harry leaving the station with his step-parents to endure another Summer holiday with them and without magic" (200-1). The crossing of the barrier at Platform 9 ¾ represents the passage between "a description of real life (which, in Harry Potter's case, is grim) into one of magic (which represents life as we would like it to be)" (Noel-Smith 201).

The entrance to Platform 9 ¾ is an ample representation of the difficulties many critics have with the texts. These censors are much like the Dursleys, who *refuse* to suspend their disbelief and hate all things not "normal." Instead, they analyze the wall from every possible angle, prod the bricks one by one, and proclaim it impossible. The critics conclude that the novels are poorly written and of shoddy workmanship because these people do not know how to reach the magic behind the closed door. The key to understanding the popularity, the *magic*, behind the Harry Potter books is on Platform 9 ¾, and only by a leap—or a run—of faith can it be reached.

The crossing of this barrier and the suspension of our disbelief is the mark of a true Potterite. To say "I love Harry Potter!" is to be accepted into this new community of readers, and for some it is the first time they have ever felt that they belong. There is an understanding between the reader and Harry as he explains to Dobby why he must return to Hogwarts for the school year: "It's all that's keeping me going. You don't know what it's like here. I don't *belong* here" (Chamber of Secrets 16). Stephanie Zackarek explains how the *Harry Potter* books "understand how all of us, adults and children alike, yearn for a sense of community and belonging even as we long to set ourselves apart, to feel that we're loved and accepted not in spite of our oddities but because of them."

The Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry provides a solution to this , for it is a community where Harry cannot only escape the torment of the Dursley's, but also be accepted *because* of his unusual talents. Natov argues that, "while Hogwarts contains all the offensive and irritating aspects of real life—it in fact mirrors its elitism and petty power struggles—is also a wondrous and humorous world" (318). Harry is set apart from his peers at Hogwarts because of the power struggle occurring between the magical community in the United Kingdom and the villain Lord Voldemort, who murdered Harry's parents—and tried to kill him as well—when Harry was just one year old.

Rowling has implied that the loss of Harry's biological parents plays an important role in the series. This suggestion is supported by both Harry's vision in the Mirror of Erised, in Sorcerer's Stone, and the appearance of his parents' ghosts during his battle with Voldemort in Goblet of Fire. Harry's discovery of the Marauder's Map, and his subsequent relationships with his father's best friends Sirius Black and Remus Lupin, play an important role in the development of his wizard family—Black and Lupin join Dumbledore as surrogate father

figures. Philip Nel believes that "these novels are about Harry creating his own surrogate family comprised of friends, teachers, and sympathetic adults" (47) to replace "the norm" represented by the Dursley's, who "illustrate the degree to which bourgeois values depend upon commodity culture" and who "have been warped by their excessive need to display their social status" (48).

The creation of an alternative family is significant in the *Harry Potter* phenomenon because it addresses the common childhood fear of abandonment, and "children need to see their feelings, particularly the darkest ones, reflected in their stories [in order] to reassure [them] that they are not alone in their fearful imaginings, that they are shared and can be addressed" (Natov 321). Similarly, Gail Grynbaum argues that the wide appeal of the *Harry Potter* series is partially due to the fact that "[t]he psychological climate in much of the rapidly changing technological world is one of spiritual depletion, emotional alienation and personal isolation." She goes on to state that Harry, Ron, and Hermione may be a "central attraction of the series in these alienated times, a reminder to many readers who have felt alone since early childhood, of the lost archetype of comradeship."

The magic of *Harry Potter* lies in the books' fantastical representations of the problems its readers face in the real world:

> the *Harry Potter* books satirize . . . the superficiality of the world, its pretenses and human failures, the narcissism of popular culture, the stupidity and cruelty of the press, the rigidity and fraudulence embedded in our institutions, particularly the schools, framed by the unrelenting snobbery and elitism of our social world. (Natov 325)

All of these ideas suggest that Harry Potter "represents embodiment and resilience in a world that represses the spirit" (Grynbaum). Gail Grynbaum also argues that the people of our world will be "called upon as never before to open themselves to their spiritual and somatic capacities

if they are to overcome the challenges placed in the way of their survival, in a world so threatened by greed and the power drive as our own." The *Harry Potter* books have become a phenomenon because they represent, with humor and compassion, this struggle for survival. Gerber sums up this idea wittily:

> Your life isn't a book, nobody's is. Look for the heroism in everyday things. Try staying married without strangling each other, or raising kids who aren't total psychopaths—it's not glamorous, but it's just as difficult as whalloping an Irish Whiskybreath with a wicked hangover. (165)

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Chapter Five

Reading *Harry Potter* with Navajo Eyes

Hollie Anderson

As I read the *Harry Potter* books as a Navajo graduate student at Purdue University in Indiana, 1,400 miles from my home, I felt that many of the themes were pertinent to me personally as an alien student disconnected from the familiar and also to the experiences of my parents, both of whom attended boarding schools. As the daughter of Navajos who had experienced enculturation through assimilationist boarding schools, it was impossible for me to read the books without the stories of my parents echoing in the shadows of the text. I experienced themes of alienation and disconnection strongly as I read. And yet, I found familiar and comforting themes as well. In this chapter I will share my observations about the ways that the *Harry Potter* books connect to my story, my family, and my culture.

I was raised on the Navajo Reservation in the Four Corners area of the United States covering parts of Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah. This area is traditional land for the Navajo. Stories are many landforms encircled by four sacred mountains the Navajo believe are their protectors. Within these mountains you can find a rich culture that was almost lost due to the U.S. government plan to assimilate all cultures to the European American culture. The culture of the Navajo people has lived on despite all the energy put into removing it. One of the instruments the United States employed in doing this was schooling. In the beginning, from the late 1800s to the early 1900s, Native American education centered on civilizing. Before the Meriam Report, the United States viewed the native ways as wrong, and school was to save them from themselves. As historian Joel Spring (1998) reflects, "one might consider this plan of Indian education as one of the great endeavors to destroy cultures and languages and replace them with another culture and language" (p. 33). After the Meriam Report clearly stated that the problem with Native education was

the government's attitude, there was a change made in approaches to Native schooling. It was declared that the students should interact more with their families instead of being isolated, and it was a policy goal that their culture and language would not be discouraged. Although the original plan to rid Native people of their culture and language through education was formed in the late 1800s and changed after the Meriam Report, the effects of the assimilation reappeared in the 1950s and 1960s when my parents were in school, due to the reaction to the civil rights movement (Spring, 1997).

The Boarding School

Both my parents attended Bureau of Indian Affairs' boarding schools in the 1960s. My mother attended an off-reservation boarding school at Fort Wingate in New Mexico. Here she was unable to speak her native language. The students there would be punished anytime they would speak Navajo. Punishments, such as washing their mouths out with soap, getting slapped on the hands with rulers, doing extra chores, or even getting paddled, were common. One thing that my mom always remembered was that the teachers would assign different students to monitor the language they spoke. The monitor would write down the names of all the students who spoke Navajo and report it to the teachers. The students who had their names reported got punished. This was hard on students because they had to tell on each other and that made barriers to having really good friends. There were similarities in the *Harry Potter* series with Harry being denied the culture he belonged to, although at first he was not even aware of it. He could not even mention anything about the "M" word, magic, in the Dursley home, but he did not know why. There are not many barriers at Hogwarts. Students are encouraged to help each other, although there are times when other students try to "monitor" one another, but usually end up getting into the same trouble. Draco tries a few times to get Harry in trouble, for example, when he finds out that Harry, Ron, and Hermione are out after hours, trying to get Norbert on his way, or when he thinks Harry is getting in trouble for flying his broom when he was told not to. Draco usually ends up unhappy with the results.

Most of the Navajo kids stayed at the dorms all the time. My mom hardly ever went home. The faculty and staff were mostly made up of older white people who expected the students to believe the religion they believed and speak the language they spoke. There was no sign of encouraging the Navajo culture there. My mom did not understand this. She just knew she was not at home and missed her family. In the *Harry Potter* books the children often stay at boarding school through holidays. Yet, this is portrayed as a positive experience, which is the children's preference. By contrast, many Navajo children longed for home. Also, the muggle children show no signs of concern that their muggle values, language, dress, and other habits are being lost.

Home to my mother was where she could freely express herself and practice the culture she had grown up in. Strong ties to the Navajo way of life ensured that my mother stayed connected to her culture and the language she spoke. My grandmother never discouraged speaking Navajo and often took my mother and her siblings to ceremonies other members of the family participated in. Never did my grandmother tell my mother to stop being Navajo. Although my grandmother was married to a non-Navajo Danish man, my grandfather, she did not assimilate to his way of life. They were able to live in two worlds and make it one for their family. In contrast, Hogwarts, the school, was the safety zone for Harry to be who he wanted to be, and "home" with the Dursleys was where he felt unknown.

This world that my mother grew up in was very different from what most Navajo kids grew up in. First of all, my mother was racially one-half Navajo and one-half Danish. The fact that she looks more Danish than Navajo contributed to the bad experience she had growing up in a boarding school. Everyone who grew up with her and knew her did not see the difference that was so apparent to everyone else. She knew she was Navajo, but when she got to the boarding school, the other students saw her as a little white girl and she experienced discrimination from people she thought were the same as her. With the students discriminating against her and the teachers not wanting her to speak her language, life was tough. Being among her family made her appreciate who people are and not what they look like. My mother speaks very fluent Navajo and English with no hint of the other's accent.

Cross-Cultural Experiences

In the *Harry Potter* books, students who are bicultural, who belong to both the muggle and magical worlds, are also targets for derision and attack. Just because they are of muggle families, they are discriminated against although they are quite capable of succeeding in performing magic like

any full-blooded wizard. Hermione and Neville are examples of people coming from two different cultures, each with the same expectation, namely, to be a good wizard. Hermione, on one hand, is a full-blooded muggle who proves her wizarding talents in her magic classes at Hogwarts and usually does better than most classmates. Neville, on the other hand, is a full-blooded wizard who has difficulty using his common wizard sense to get through everyday tasks. This is a case that shows that just because you are born into a culture, it does not mean you are automatically better than someone who is taught the culture. This part of the text also sends readers the positive message that where you come from should not matter.

In many ways my experience going to Purdue University from the Navajo Nation is similar to how Harry felt going to Hogwarts. As a graduate student in education, I often felt isolated, but still excited and glad to be somewhere new, in a different culture. I felt isolated because I was so far away from home. My culture was far away. Everything was different. I had to watch everything from the things I laughed at, and the way I pronounced words. At times I just wanted to get in my truck and drive home, and at times when I was home, I could not wait to get back to Indiana. My experience is similar to what other Navajo students experience. As Wilder, Jackson, and Smith (2001) describe Navajo students' transitions to postsecondary education:

> Participants reported feeling uneasy and somewhat "disconnected" when they left their homeland to pursue work or educational opportunities. They also reported feeling confused about mixed messages to (a) leave their reservation to be successful, and (b) maintain their traditional connection to their tribe, land, and culture. (p. 123)

Harry was put into a culture that was nothing like the one he had been growing up in. He had to learn on his own what things are and what they mean to the people who are of the culture in which he was placed. Although Harry was glad to have left the Dursleys, he was still uncertain of the new environment. The smallest things confused Harry because he did not know what every wizard grew up knowing. The whole idea of being a wizard and practicing magic seemed very uncommon to Harry, who had grown up as a muggle. When he first met Hagrid, who was sent to pick up Harry from the Dursleys, he found out more about himself than the Dursleys had ever let him know and he could hardly believe any of it. It all was very shocking for Harry to find out he came from a wizard family with very famous parents and that he, too, was very famous. Once

Harry stepped into the Leaky Cauldron and attention came to him, he knew that everyone knew something that he did not. When Hagrid led Harry into Diagon Alley, the physical setting was something that Harry had never seen before, although any wizard kid his age would not have been so excited because it was a normal thing to see cauldrons of all shapes and makes or shops that sold magic wands. The encounter that made Harry feel very unsure and stupid was when he went into Madam Malkin's Robes For All Occasions and had his first experience with another first-year Hogwarts student. This encounter brought out the given knowledge that every wizard should know. The boy Harry came in contact with, which we later find out is Draco Malfoy, expects that just because Harry is of a wizarding family and he is going to Hogwarts, he should know the simple things. Although Harry did feel stupid for not understanding why a first-year was trying to smuggle a broomstick into school, or what on earth Quidditch was or why it was a bad thing to be in the Hufflepuff house, he did not let the other boy know this. Harry probably did not want to embarrass himself or just the fact that he already disliked the boy's attitude made him not ask questions.

As a graduate student at a Midwestern university I found that I, like Harry, often questioned what people were talking about because I did not know some things that were everyday knowledge for someone from the local culture. One day, in one of the classes I taught called "Multiculturalism and Education," one of my undergraduate students was telling us that his grandfather did the eulogy for Norman Dale. Apparently, everyone knew who Norman Dale was, whereas I was wondering what was so special about him. The students had to explain to me that Norman Dale was the coach that Gene Hackman portrayed in the 1986 movie *Hoosiers*. I do not know if it was Indiana culture, or just college basketball culture that I lacked knowledge about, when, on another occasion the students were talking about the situation that was happening with Bobby Knight. They were all talking about it and after listening awhile, I asked, "Who is Bobby Knight?" They looked at me as if I came from another planet. I was a living example of cross-cultural experience for my students. Aside from what other people were talking about that I was unfamiliar with, small things like the commercials on the local television stations did not make too much sense. There was a commercial for Pizza King pizza and their line was something about how Pizza King was as traditional to Indiana as cow tipping. Is cow tipping really a tradition? Not

only were some of the things in the new culture not making sense, but there were times when what I said did not make sense to people I was talking to. It did make sense, but not in the way I wanted it to. The full context was missing. I had to watch how I said things, such as when I talked about the reservation I often said, "the rez." I would realize that people did not know what "the rez" was until I explained it, starting back to when the U.S. government came up with the idea of reserving land for different tribes. The word rez, so simple in my culture, is an entire history lesson in another culture, the same as Norman Dale was simple enough in one culture and a history lesson to me.

The culture shock that Harry was experiencing is also similar to what happens in the Navajo culture when a child grows up off the reservation and then returns back to the reservation. The Navajo who grows up without the Navajo culture can find himself feeling embarrassed or lost because things that are learned growing up Navajo are things that are a part of everyday life. There is not a class to take to learn how to be Navajo. The norms that Navajo children come to know are things they pick up from their environment. When children who might have been adopted return to the Navajo reservation, there is no way they could know culturally specific details and norms because not even the Navajo kids who do know these realize that these things, such as how to be funny or polite, are different. If you asked Navajo kids why they do things the way they do they probably couldn't explain it. So, when Navajo kids come into contact with other kids who are not Navajo they do not realize that there is a difference. The children are not the ones to blame for discriminating in such circumstances, but it is important to have these children aware of what can be harmful or hurtful. In the *Harry Potter* books, Draco Malfoy might have known he was discriminating. He did not realize he was talking to someone who, he would later find out, was Harry Potter the famous wizard.

A contemporary example of children growing up off the reservation and returning with no clue as to what being Navajo means are the children of the L. D. S. Mormon Church placement program. Navajo Mormon families sometimes send their children off to school and to live with someone else to learn more about the Mormon Church, which is always off the reservation. These children typically grow up in a white household with little connection to their Navajo roots. After the children complete their schooling in the placement program, which they might have been in for several years, they return to their families on the reservation and are

expected to live within a culture they have not experienced in the past few years. This causes profound culture shock and feelings of being lost. It is very difficult for such young people to adapt to the way of life of the Navajo because there are so many differences between these cultures. Parents who send their children on these placement programs believe it is for the good of the children, but what most of them do not understand is that this program uses this tactic to assimilate Native American children into the American culture. The sad thing is that it works.

Feelings of embarrassment and stupidity based on cross cultural misunderstanding are sensed as Harry Potter listens to Draco talk. The good thing is that Harry comes across some nice people to help him understand this new culture in which he was placed. Harry's friend plays a vital role in his understanding of this new culture. Like Harry, I found nice people to help me understand the new culture in which I was placed. A friend of mine was at Purdue a year before I went there. She was originally from Staten Island in New York City but she helped me understand some of the "normal" things done in West Lafayette, Indiana. She did not understand some things out there either, but she knew they were done. I guess you could say she taught me how to go through the motions, but not the reasons why, just because she merely shared what she was told. Another friend of mine who was also Native American, helped me understand the Indiana culture from what she had experienced in the four years she lived there. I think just talking with her about the differences we had both noticed was what helped me get along more easily. My professors also had a lot of input in helping me understand my position and exactly what I was doing in Indiana by asking me questions that made me think critically about what my true thoughts were about where I was. They also helped me put words to my feelings. One incident occurred when I was talking with a professor who was also not from Indiana but had been there several years. She said, "It's like someone cut your image out of a picture and placed it in another picture with a different scene and it just doesn't look right." It made sense because I did feel like I was somewhere that was just two-dimensional to me, everything was just backdrop. I did not really get into any of the third dimension of West Lafayette, which I would consider to be the culture. The only place that was real to me and made sense was the classroom. Many aspects of classroom culture are shared across regions. I think also that in the back of my head I kept thinking I was out there only for school and, thus, I did not think I had to get rooted into the culture.

Types of Families

The biggest change in being in Indiana was being without my family, with whom I had lived closely for twenty-three years. Family is very important to most people and it is a significant theme in the *Harry Potter* series. As I read, I noticed that there were also many similarities between the idea of family in the *Harry Potter* series and the idea of family in Navajo culture. There are also differences. Navajo families can be related to on either side of what we consider good or bad families. The first family that we come across in the *Harry Potter* stories is the Dursley family. The Dursley-like family occurs in every culture. This family was ashamed of being related to a wizarding family. Navajo people that know they are related to people who use witchcraft with negative motivations usually react the same way. They want nothing to do with them. They will not relate to these people unless they have to because they are still family and sometimes involvement in negatively motivated witchcraft is not even their fault.

Although the Dursleys did not want anything to do with Harry, just because he was of a wizarding family, they still took him in. Kinship made the Dursleys keep and raise Harry. The fact that Aunt Petunia was Harry's maternal aunt seems like the most logical explanation. This explanation might be logical to me because, in Navajo culture, maternal aunts are considered mothers to the babies of their sisters. Because clans and identity are passed through the mother's bloodline, which makes the Navajo people a matriarchal one, it is a simple explanation as to why the Dursleys did not give up Harry Potter. They might not have done the same things for him as they did for Dudley, or even consider him one of their own, but they still gave him what he needed.

Another family that the readers are introduced to is the Weasley family. Although the Weasley family was totally different from the Dursleys, they, too, show Navajo characteristics. The generosity that the Weasleys demonstrated even though they were not blood relatives of Harry's, showed their concern for his well-being in giving him what he needs emotionally. The Weasleys are a family who many Navajo can relate to because, although, they might not be as well off financially as the dominant culture might suggest is adequate, they emit the feeling that they are happy and thankful that they have their family. Of course, there are always going to be people in the family who show their gratitude differently. Mr. and Mrs. Weasley were proud of their family and made sure that they all had what they needed even though it might mean that Ron got the hand-me-downs. Although some of the children might have had to put up making do with secondhand things, they all had plenty of respect for their parents for they knew that their father loved his job and that he did the best he could for them and that their mother was always there to give them what they needed emotionally and, if necessary, materially. We do see Mr. Weasley trying to do a little more for them when he took the boys to the Quidditch World Cup. Charlie, Bill, and Percy seemed to be happy with what they had, and although they were determined to live on their own, in their own jobs, they still show their respect to their mother and father. These family dynamics will be familiar to the Navajo reader.

Magic and Nature and Culture

In addition to the broad themes of schooling and family, there are also many details about culture, magic, and nature that a Navajo could relate to in the *Harry Potter* series. The parts that might seem fiction to a mainstream American reader such as the cloak of invisibility or animagi would be something that is possible to understand and believe to a traditional Navajo reader. Traditional Navajos, like myself, can understand that there is witchcraft out there and all people have their own magic. Whether they choose to make it good or evil is what will shine through. There are always good and evil in every culture. Along with the good and evil in every culture, all cultures have a way to protect themselves from what opposes them. In the case of Harry Potter, his lightening-bolt shaped scar was a mark of the protection that came from his mother. Lightening is also a symbol of protection to the Navajo people because lightening was used by twin heroes as swords to defeat "monsters."

What people consider frightening varies across cultures. Some things in Harry Potter made me feel uncomfortable. Little things like the death day party disturbed me. Talking about death is taboo, so it is usually not mentioned or discussed. What made me uncomfortable reading this was that it was a party and there were these kids attending this party with the ghosts and rotten food. Another thing that is taboo in Navajo culture is the owl. The owl is usually a bad omen or a messenger of bad news. For Harry, having an owl was a good thing. In both Harry Potter and Navajo culture, animagi are real. Sirius Black, Professor Lupin, and Wormtail were able to transform from a human figure to an animal. It is said that certain people in the Navajo culture are able to transform themselves into animal figures. The people who can do this are considered witches and it

is done by magic. The ability to transform into an animal was developed for the purpose of necessity and travel for the Navajo centuries before modern transportation was available. It goes all the way back to the beginning of man. Like the wizards in the book, the Navajo culture has both good and bad practitioners of magic. These days, it is oftentimes used for personal gain in a negative way. Although it was never meant to be a bad thing, the idea of animagi has become a negative one.

Teaching *Harry Potter* to Navajo Children

I am currently a fifth grade teacher in a school on the Navajo Reservation. As I read these books, I have reflected on how I would use the *Harry Potter* series in my classroom. It has many multicultural issues that need to be addressed in a fifth grade classroom. Being a fifth grade teacher has made me aware of the many issues that our students face every day. These texts can be a valuable resource in discussions about cross-cultural experiences. Themes can be taught from both a broadly historical and a personal and immediate point of view. I would be concerned that Navajo children not bring exclusively positive connotations to the idea of boarding school based on their readings of the *Harry Potter* books. As I grew up, the term "boarding school" was painfully evocative of my parents' experiences. By contrast, my fifteen-year-old brother reading these books may have both more positive and more contradictory associations with this term. This issue can stimulate an important discussion among fifth graders. Ideas of magic and evil can also be discussed. There are many books that students need to have written permission to read, which I understand, but the *Harry Potter* series is something that students should be reading. As a Navajo teaching Navajo students, I would not perceive the *Harry Potter* books to be an evil thing or even a bad thing to read. The creativity in itself is a factor that students at about the fifth-grade level need to explore. For many students, this series involves the most "real" characters that have been written in a long time.

Core issues of multiculturalism are very apparent throughout the series. The ways that different races are portrayed can be profitably discussed with students. Socioeconomic status is the most dominant difference among groups at Hogwarts and should also be examined. The socioeconomic difference is something that I related to most. There are many times that dominant cultures try to use their power to oppress another culture. Using the series to help kids understand that there are

biases in the world might encourage them to reflect upon themselves and about what kind of people they will be in our society. Do they want to be like Draco and his family? Or do they want to be like Harry and the Weasley's? All students who read these books, with whom I am acquainted, are able to relate to them somehow—from ten year olds at my school to my fifteen-year-old brother in high school, to people who study behind the scenes of *Harry Potter*. Navajo students and teachers and the traditional Navajo family who believe in balance and harmony can enjoy these books for their entertainment value and for the "realness" of these characters and events, but they will inevitably be read with Navajo eyes.

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Chapter Two

Harry Potter's World: Magic, Technoculture, and Becoming Human

Peter Appelbaum

It is important to remember that we all have magic inside of us.
—J. K. Rowling (attributed to Rowling at the Harry Potter Lexicon, 2000, Steve Vander Ark http://www.i2k.com/~svderark/lexicon/w_spells.html)

Some people are still asking, "What is it about J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* books that has made them so popular?" I want to ask, "What is it about our culture that embraces the *Harry Potter* books and has turned *Harry Potter* into such a phenomenon?" There are more subtle and interesting things to look at than, say, the general content of the books. Popular works by successful children's authors, such as Jane Yolen (*Wizard's Hall*, 1991), Phillip Pullman (*Golden Compass*, 1996), Lois Lowry (*The Giver*, 1993), and Natalie Babbitt (*Tuck Everlasting*, 1975), for example, have enjoyed excellent marketing of novels that evoke parallel worlds, magic, and folklore. Each has a preadolescent protagonist beginning to negotiate the psychosocial crisis of individual versus group identity. *Harry Potter* hype may also share characteristics with other recent promotional schemes and product tie-ins, such as *Pokemon, Power Puff Girls, Power Rangers, WWF WarZone*, and so on. But to "blame" the successes of *Harry Potter* on corporate marketing alone begs the question. After all, some potential product hypes don't make it, whereas others do. And few of them start out as a quiet book from an unknown author. To interpret the *Harry Potter* successes as one of corporate culture preying on innocent children (Giroux, 2000) would, I suggest, perpetuate inappropriate assumptions. I wish to debunk three of these *pre*-sumptions: Can we say that consumer culture has trumped all other possible manifestations of liberal democracy? Rather, it may be that market dynamics and individ-

ual agency are far more complex. Do we want to say that children are passive, naive recipients of greedy corporate cultural products? Surely children and others act as agents of social change even as they behave in certain socially reproductive ways.

Can we understand the cultural meanings of *Harry Potter* stories (or any other popular cultural artifact) as distanced observers? I suggest that distanced interpretations further collapse the cultural story of *Harry Potter* into the world of children's literature, ignoring the wider range of readers (including college students and other adults)[1] and the cultural phenomena of *Harry Potter* beyond the books themselves (e.g., *Harry Potter* toys; diaries, and other bookstore impulse items; towels, mirrors, and other home decorating products; websites, filk,[2] and other fanware). One thing I have learned from cultural studies is that textual analysis is not enough. Nor is it enough to present a well-honed social analysis of popular culture phenomena (Daspit & Weaver, 1998). It is important to understand how children and other *Harry Potter* fans "read" and interpret the books, cultural products, consumer items, and fanware—the details of the *Harry Potter* culture—as cultural resources out of which people make sense of themselves (Fiske, 1990). It is especially important to learn from people how they "use" popular culture resources to make sense of their lives, their culture, and their fears and fantasies, and through such mediation, to construct new modes of meaning (Eco, 1979; de Certeau, 1984; Appelbaum, 1999).

In this chapter, I describe some of what I have learned through talking with young people in informal and formal interviews about the ways that the popularity of *Harry Potter* texts dovetails well with other mass culture phenomena. I focus particularly on those aspects of *Harry Potter* that speak to issues of technology, magic, and the role of science as popular culture resources. I argue that the books and associated "fanware" are key sites for the cultural construction of science and technology; in speaking to issues of magic and science, technology and culture, *Harry Potter* is emblematic of the kinds of cultural practices that lead to its popularity. Within these cultural practices, we can see science and technology mediating our "common sense." At the same time, socially constructed expectations produce what we know as science and what we recognize as technology. This all happens in and out of science as practiced by scientists, and in and out of our popular cultures. All of this is mixed up and interwoven and, together, called "cultural practices." Within these cultural practices, specific images and conventions are identified as icons of science and technology, indeed, the way the world works; other images become icons for magic, mysticism, and other categories of cultural practices that, for most of us, serve to distinguish what we call science from what we call not-science.

These cultural practices, ways of thinking, and icons, along with their use as metaphors, are what I think of as "technoculture." Technoculture is thus the amalgam of our postmodern society, heavily mediated by and productive of science and technology, both as popular cultures, cultural practices, and icons—and as constructed significantly via science and technology itself. When we listen to children and learn about youth culture, magic and technoculture stand out as essential to the project of becoming human (Appelbaum, 1999). Popular culture narratives set up a kind of hero who confronts technoculture through technoculture itself. And when we listen to readers of *Harry Potter*, we see that the books and fanware are not culturally unique. Instead, they are consistent with technocultural themes of morality and identity in a postmodern society. Children experience power and violence differently from adults, and their notions of magic and technology can be different as well. Caught up in magic and technology is the role of wonder: How teachers respond to children's wonderings about the natural world combines with children's own interpretations of that world. The combination constructs powerful forms of cultural dynamics and conceptions of technology. In both the *Harry Potter* books and in children's lives, school functions to accentuate what constitutes technologies, what constitutes magic and wonder, and, finally, through consumer culture, what it means to become a human being. In this way, I find that the books and the culture that embraces them buttress each others' postmodern efforts to fulfill an outdated enlightenment fantasy of utopia through technology.

The Technoculture of Consumer Culture in and out of School

For children growing up in and with technoculture, concepts of cyborg imagery, biological monsters, fantasy characters, power, knowledge, magic, and prosthetic extensions of self are not categorical. Many things that adults see as newfangled or that cause anxieties are accepted by young people as inherent components of the "natural" world. Thus an adult fear of dehumanization through technology might translate into a

performance of identity or a social connection for a child. Obversely, a young person's sense of danger may translate into a technological task for an adult. For a child, technology may be magic or science; power may be a fantasy or a monstrous myth. For a number of the children I have spoken with in my research, power can emerge out of a persistence in seeking knowledge; for others it may be understood as a gift bestowed by biological luck. Knowledge for the children I have spoken with may be conflated with power or magically lost. On the other hand, technology may be a prize or a tool of adult power (Appelbaum, 1999). Thus, we find that chemistry sets are surprisingly popular because children want to pretend to be in a potions class at Hogwarts. Also popular are Animal Planet's sound-enhanced animal toys because Hagrid's Care of Magical Creatures class has tapped into children's simultaneous fear of and love for animals.

Technocentric utopianism for many children is really more aptly described as melancholic acceptance of responsibility. Common wisdom describes technocultural popular culture as a working through of adult fears and fantasies (Waught, 1947; Wright, 2001). Early superhero technoculture reenacted the cold war conflicts of good guys and bad guys in a battle for humanity and the universe. Historians of popular culture (Waugh, 1947; Wright, 2001; Appelbaum, 1999; Napier, 2001) suggest distinct evolution through several periods that characterize the nature of the heroes and the narrative structure in particular ways. Following good guy versus bad guy constructs of the cold war, subsequent cultural commodities demonstrate a phase of inner psychological turmoil, splitting the good versus evil battle into a multiplicity of conflicting identities. For example, Batman and Spiderman, two heroes plagued with inner, psychological turmoil and battling villains who suffer from countless psychological disorders, replaced Superman, a strong, almost invincible boy from small town USA. The literature on popular culture (Napier, 2001; Wright, 2001; Poitras, 2000; Levi, 1996; Rushkoff, 1996) suggests that this psychological phase was subsumed more recently by the *anime* hero. This hero is a "gundam"[3] child who inherits the aftermath of technological havoc wreaked by adults; the hero dons prosthetic devices scavenged from an inherited wasteland in a Romantic gesture of faith in the ultimate goodness of humanity. Gundam children are present in television programs, animated films, video games, role-playing games, and other forms of entertainment.

Harry Potter, the young hero of the books that carry his name, is characterized very much in the spirit of the gundam hero. He is thrust into the most serious fights of good and evil, the ultimate outcome of which will determine the fate of the world "as we know it." This fight of good and evil is one that he inherits from the previous generation, a generation in which his own mother and father failed at the task he himself must now undertake. Harry meets his challenges head on, and with glorious enthusiasm, using whatever latest trick of magic he has been able to obtain and control. These magical artifacts, such as spells and potions, wands, invisibility cloaks, a map that divines the locations of people unseen, and so on, play the same role in these books that a prosthetic hand or megaweapon body suit does for the prototypical gundam hero. Magic, in this sense, becomes a technology. Bruce McMillan, senior vice president and group studio general manager at Electronic Arts (the makers of many successful video and computer games), was recently quoted describing the *Harry Potter* books in this way.

> J. K. Rowling wrote her fiction in a way that game mechanics flow out of it [. . .] The first book [. . .] is packed with moments that seem almost designed to appear in a game: the gauntlet of puzzles that Harry faces to rescue the *Sorcerer's Stone*, the character-building that takes place as Harry learns to be a wizard, and much more. (Hendrix, 2001, pp. 37–38)

If we accept such historical interpretations of superheroes, we might ask, "What's next?" If humans have united within themselves extraordinary powers of destruction and creation, will they or can they bring into being a new evolutionary step? Those of us who work with young children should ask ourselves what the implications are for the types of experiences these children might be offered by adults, given that they are "schooled" in the popular culture to savor the gundam role (Appelbaum, 1999). There are indeed ways that gundam popular culture buttresses common sense attitudes about knowledge and curriculum. For example, the common view of technology as prostheses that amplify the potential powers of humans is consistent with the view that knowledge gained in school are cultural capital. By this I mean that prostheses for the body are part of a more global way of understanding our world in which knowledge is recognized as bits of things that are collected and later "spent" in the marketplace of college admissions and careers (Appelbaum, 1995). Gundam heroes are also built upon techno-utopianism. Science and technology are

constructed in the school curriculum as well as popular technoculture as techniques of progress. The gundam hero accepts the premise that science and technology are their own antidotes and thus reconstructs technology as self-perpetuating and necessary. But should or can we seriously respond to gundam desires with and through the school curriculum? Can such desires be interrogated and challenged?

Educators' Responses

Teachers tend to feign disinterest in childhood experiences of cyberculture. They see as part of their job the need to further separate popular from high-status culture. School knowledge is part of that high-status culture. Popular and mass media raise the status of school knowledge when teachers keep them outside of school. But children are intimately caught up in popular media, and they use mass media resources in play, in social relationships, and in imagining possibilities. When teachers preserve the in-school versus outside-of-school boundaries, they cut themselves off from relationships with children directly connected with the most pressing issues of self, identity, morality, power, and knowledge. Sometimes a teacher relies on seemingly positive goals when effecting these boundaries. For a teacher who sees his or her job in terms of demystification or enculturation, it is gravely difficult to construct educational practice as migration into a new culture. This kind of teacher wants, instead, to teach the children about the traditions and cultural legacy of the old culture out of which they are entering the new cultures of *anime*. And, for a teacher who sees her or his job as bestowing the gifts of civilization, it is difficult to do so in terms of a cultural practice that celebrates the Romantic hope of childhood as the savior of humanity. Teachers would more likely understand their role as saving humanity from the strange, challenging actions of the *anime* hero. Furthermore, it is absurd for a teacher to imagine a curriculum that dehumanizes even her or himself as a tool for *anime* heroism or post-*anime* evolution: In the obsessively survivalist mode of teacher practice spawned by standards-based accountability bureaucracies, what possible technologies of self could or would we even think credible? Indeed, what is the role of a teacher other than the conserving one of passing on the wisdom of the past? I suggest that our new technoculture requires teaching practices that facilitate an interrogation of this culture and the facilitation of self-understanding necessary to unravel the intricacies of self-identity in a postmodern world. The "new curriculum" should consider alternative visions of technology that move it away from the metaphor of prosthesis. Consider, for example, Sadie Plant's notion that technology is not just an add-on to the human body that amplifies its powers, but instead serves to reengineer the body itself, creating a new and different cyborg body (Plant, 1997). The *Harry Potter* books speak to the reengineering of the body through technology in their examples of magic used as a tool to regrow human limbs, occasionally (or accidentally) removing someone's bones from a part of their body leaving it temporarily rubbery and deformed to cosmetically enhance someone's teeth, and, most directly, in the role of the "animagi," those who change into animal form. Curriculum, then, must speak fully to issues of identity and questions of what it means to be human in the face of reengineering and cultural change.

This challenge to teachers is consistent with the cultural view that the gundam hero must save the world even as the clueless adults sit idly by, paralyzed by the threats that they themselves have unleashed. What the *Harry Potter* books provide, however, is a reassurance that some adults really do know what is happening, and indeed that these adults can be trusted to come through with support when the going gets rough. Albus Dumbledore, Minerva McGonagall, Sirius Black, and Rubeus Hagrid, for example, often turn out to be fully aware of what is happening, or at least adequately conscious of what Harry and his friends are up to so that they can offer assistance at just the right moments. And Harry and his friends always seem to have recently mastered just enough new spells and tricks to accomplish what is necessary. In the end, as with the gundam hero, it is the child who must save the world. Nevertheless, in these books, the bleakness is tempered. It is almost as if the adults know that the "real" curriculum is outside of the classes and is just enticing enough to interest these children in their preparation for leadership. Real-world challenges provide the problem-solving context so necessary for meaningful learning. As a treatise on education, the *Harry Potter* books make an intriguing statement on the boundaries across the school and popular curricula.[1] If we only knew the story of every other child at Hogwarts, could it be that they, too, are having adventures? Maybe the school is set up to trick people into coming together for real-life problem-solving outside of school under the careful guidance of Dumbledore and his friends?

Power, Wonder, and Magic in an Acquisitive Culture

Power and violence are not always what they seem to be. There is a way in which a child who spends three hours a day playing *Smackdown, WWF WarZone, Timesplitters,* and other violent video games and then watches a *WWF* video for another hour and a half will recoil in horror and fright at scenes from popular films such as *Rules of Engagement,* or even the final scene in *The Secret of Roan Inish. Smackdown* and the *World-Wide Wrestling Federation WarZone* are arcade-style fighting games in which characters use gratuitous violence alone or in groups to render their competitors unconscious or devoid of any life energy. While the fanatic interest in *World-Wide Wrestling*'s violent wrestling soap operas has waned in the last few years, many boys and young men still rent the videos for their nostalgic entertainment value. Yet most players and viewers will quickly insist they can tell that the violence is "fake," and that their interest in the entertainment has more to do with the complex strategies involved, or in the intricacies of the soap-opera style plots. *Rules of Engagement,* a 2000 film starring Tommy Lee Jones, Mark Feuerstein, and Samuel L. Jackson, and directed by William Friedkin, which involves a team of marines responding to a fictional attack on a U.S. embassy in Yemen, is rated R for graphic violence. However, much of the violence is implicit and artistically developed through techniques of suspense. *The Secret of Roan Inish,* director John Sayles's 1995 rendering of an Irish folktale, is steeped in magic and tradition. While supposedly suitable for family viewing, at least according to many film critics and its PG rating, the final dramatic scene involves a child's mother returning to the sea to live as a seal, leaving many children horrified at the child's loss of its mother.

Similarly, a young girl might try out seemingly sadistic or masochistic choices in a Purple Moon *Rockett* computer game, yet refuse to view *Rugrats* on television because she finds the character, Angelica, so horrific. The *Rockett* computer games incorporate a narrative about a preteen's life choices; the player makes decisions about what the young girl, Rockett, should do in various social situations. While an adult observer might expect the player's choices to be an indication of what the player might choose in a similar situation, many girls playing the game in fact choose a less socially sanctioned option just to see how it affects the plot. In the *Rugrats* television program, the oldest child, Angelica, is not only extremely bossy but also often puts the younger children into terribly awkward or potentially dangerous situations. Even though viewing *Rugrats* could entertain by allowing viewers the chance to see how children might make poor social choices, or reconcile them, many children actually find the character so reprehensible that they choose another form of entertainment. (Nevertheless, this should be understood in the light of the program's continued popularity.) Visibility of gore, as opposed to realism of violence, can be distinguished by many children as they discuss moral issues and scenarios.[5]

There has been much written in the popular press about the violence of the *Harry Potter* books. It is suggested that the books might be unhealthy because of this. However, the violent scenes are not what entice people to the books and are not what the books per se are about. A *Harry Potter* reader can handle the notions of being scarred for life on the forehead by an evil sorcerer or of a child in the school being killed by this same sorcerer a few books later. What readers of these books have suggested in their discussions with me is that they can easily separate these violent events from the moral contexts in which they take place. It is the morality to which they turn in applying "lessons learned" to their own interactions with "real people" in their lives. I admit to adult incredulity when it comes to this violence, and as educators, we are seriously concerned about the violence or threats of violence through mass culture narratives that affect our daily lives in schools. But reader-response theory remains: Some children read the "dark themes" in *Harry Potter* books as a backdrop to the details and contend with the dark themes on another plane of existence independent of their reading of these books. Similarly, some children are so caught up in the strategic details of video games, *Pokemon,* or the *Magic* card game, that they do not see the violence that adults see readily; they contend with issues of violence and control in thoroughly different ways when violence appears to them as part of a life outside of the game. In particular, invisible but possible violence is far more frightening to these children than larger-than-life cartoonish violence, even when the cartoonish violence is extremely graphic. (For example, *Independence Day* or *The Matrix* would be consumed as enjoyable entertainment, but *Contact* is unbearable because the suspenseful unknown is carried for so long in the film. *Independence Day* would initially seem to be terribly frightening as it graphically depicts aliens coming very close to violently taking over the Earth; *The Matrix* depicts the horrific scenario of a future Earth being nothing more than an illusion for people who have been reduced to energy resources for intelligent machines. *Contact,* which describes the tensions

between science and religion when contact with aliens becomes possible depicts no violence but keeps the suspense about the aliens hidden throughout the majority of the film.) I suppose the question comes down to whether or not children can tell the difference between the games and the "real world." We seem to have some evidence to the contrary. Eugene Provenzo (1991) and others have amassed a collection of research that suggests reasons to worry about the culture of violence being so prevalent. In the end, as I talk with and work with children, my own evidence is that they are genuinely living an independent trajectory. The enacted violence could in some ways be said to be consistent with the dark imagery of the *Harry Potter* books and the game-like realism of current high-graphics fighting and shooting games; but I find the causation to be in the other direction. If anything, these images and choices of entertainment are a semantic sign of something in our culture rather than an origin of cultural meaning. That is, the images that children play with tell us more about the fears and fantasies of the adults who provide the images and the resources for making meaning that are available in our culture than about what children are becoming or doing to themselves or our culture. This does not mean that violent and sexist images would never be an origin of meaning for any particular child; it certainly is possible that they could be. It just is not such an origin in my research. And I do not see it as the common experience of most children.

Another popular concern that has led to the books being banned in some communities is the attention to the dark arts and magic in general. It may be feared that young people would become interested in pursuing cultish practices. The use of these features makes the books no different from numerous popular television series and video games (see, for example, the television programs *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, *Charmed*, the *Final Fantasy* video game series, and the computer game, *Black and White*).[6]

Magic is strongly associated with experiences of wonder. There is little distinction between the *Harry Potter* books and the *Magic: The Gathering* card game, or a cyberhero like *Inspector Gadget* and a round of laser tag. Paintball, for a child, can be a variation on Pokemon, or a dramatic fantasy based on the *Power Rangers*, or—if "I" played paintball last weekend and "you" never have—a real-life "play" of power against another child in the acquisitive culture of childhood. In tapping into magic, many forms of youth technoculture reach into the realm of wonder in ways that establish these cultural commodities as educative experiences in the

Deweyan sense that they promote growth (maybe not growth in the school-culture sense, however). When adults set up school as distinct from the world of wonder (even to compete with popular culture for "coolness" or "cleverness" but in the act clarifying the impossibility of this attempt), they fail children and abdicate their responsibility to participate in mass culture and peer interactions. In denying the potential of wonder through magic, educators are also denying students an environment that is educative. Three questions arise: Should we try to create educational encounters that directly mirror the linking of magic, technology, and wonder as in, for example, Botball tournaments (KISS Institute, 2001)? Should teachers hype science into a parallel form of "edutainment," as in television science programs? Or should educators establish science/technology/wonder as a critical examination of the popular (Appelbaum & Clark, in press; Gough, 1993)? I suggest, in contrast, that children gravitate to the wonder where it is. When wonder is not in the curriculum, they will find it elsewhere, outside of school.

An interesting case study is afforded by Hasbro's marketing of the new toy, Pox™ (Tierney, 2001). The new toy was introduced by identifying who the coolest of the cool children are: roaming playgrounds and neighborhoods. Marketers asked, "Who's the coolest kid you know?" When they landed a kid who said, "Me," they invited the "alpha pup" to get paid to learn a new video game. Fighting monsters are created by collecting body parts and powers. Warriors are put together from the collected parts; then you program a battle sequence by strategically balancing the strengths and weaknesses of the various body parts. The coolest kids can boast about what level they have attained, what potential body parts they have collected; the ones who lose are not humiliated publicly since the game is played stealthily. *Pox* depends not on reflexes as with other video games, but on "the collection of arcana." Asked why they like the game, boys say, "because it's, like, battling and fighting," and "we like violence!" Tierney writes that they sound bloodthirsty without a sign of menace. He cites research that suggests that violent entertainment is actually associated with a decrease in violence among young people. The seeming connection between violent entertainment and violence, he suggests, might be better explained by a strong increase in violence in society begun long before the advent of video games.

Things dominate the life of children. For young people in the early twenty-first century, commodification as the final arbiter of identity and

acquisition is intimately entwined with self. If knowledge is the sort of knowledge truly conflated with power, then children voraciously grab for it. But if it is ambiguous in its relation to power, then it is ignored in the interest of efficiency. Thus, a young boy will exert whatever it takes to acquire the new Sims (Electronic Arts, 2000) game before others get it, or to learn a trick from *GamePro* magazine before his friend does; yet the same child could care less about the financial mathematics of purchasing the game unless the money actually makes a difference in his life. In the latter case, if school artificially makes this into a world problem–type experience, the conflicting identity politics is a crucial element in self and community. Similarly, the importance of *Pokemon Gameboy* will fluctuate for many girls depending on its competition for importance with current MTV star details, varying makeup items and body gels, and other technologies of the body. For both boys and girls, technology is a fashion; but this fashion is played out in gendered and other ways. In the *Harry Potter* culture, material products include wizard trading cards, Quidditch brooms, the best owl, a magic pet, and magic treats sold on wizard trains. And these commodities serve parallel functions. For *Harry Potter* readers, consumer culture makes early possession of the books and a child's recall of details into an acquired need that works as cultural capital in analogous ways. Indeed, the child who possesses full command of detail, like the player of the new *Pox*™ game immersed in the collection of arcana, is the one most likely to win. In one sense, this consistency in and out of the books serves to make the stories more "believable" for readers. Students at Hogwarts collect trading cards of great wizards and Quidditch heroes much like young people outside the books obsess over sports cards, and this common consumerism makes the children in the books more "realistic." And Harry quickly learns to covet the latest, most expensive gadgets like a typical child outside the books.

In another sense, acquisitive consumer culture dominates popular and *Harry Potter* culture in ways that make the books emblematic of the culture in which they appear as commodities themselves. Early in *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, for example, the competing Slytherin team demoralize the Gryffindors by showing off their new "Nimbus Two Thousand and One" broomsticks. "Very latest model. Only came out last month . . . I believe it outstrips the old Two Thousand series by a considerable amount" (Rowling, 1999a, p. 111). Harry's friends are left holding their outmoded "Cleansweep Fives," no longer competitive with the newer Nimbus models. In *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* (Rowling, 1999b), Harry is mesmerized by an advertisement for an even newer model, the "Firebolt," which is so hyped that it is priced upon request. Harry "didn't like to think how much gold the Firebolt would cost. He had never wanted anything as much in his whole life" (Rowling, 1999b, pp. 51–52). He tries to console himself by noting that he has never lost a Quidditch match on his Nimbus Two Thousand, yet "he returned, almost every day after that, just to look at the Firebolt" (Rowling, 1999b, p. 52). In this way *Potter* and popular consumer culture intertwine consumerism and technoculture by turning new technologies into coveted consumer products.

It was James MacDonald (1995) who wrote:

> It is my personal myth that today's technology is yesterday's magic. Further, it is intuitive feeling that technology is in effect externalization of the hidden consciousness of human potential. Technology, in other words, is a necessary development for human beings in that it is the means of externalizing the potential that lies within. (p. 75)

The *Harry Potter* books portray MacDonald's wisdom in, for example, their juxtaposition of the flying car and the use of tea leaves to divine fortune, but even more directly in the all-important fixation on the best and latest Quidditch broom. Why would a school full of apprentice wizards need to buy the latest innovation in design and technology? To reemphasize class and justice themes? To satisfy a "real boy's" need for toys and desire? It is the same audience finding this believable that runs out to purchase the newest *Magic* deck, or searches the Internet for rare and expensive no-longer-in-print cards, the same audience that shells out $30.00 for a quarter-inch of plastic that can be painted and used in a *Warhammer* game. And it is the same audience that knows all the lyrics to Brittany Spears's latest video, the dance moves to Christina Aguileira's new video, and the place to buy the coolest body gel.

Harry Potter's World

This chapter is an interrogation of the world that embraces the *Harry Potter* phenomenon; it is not an extensive analysis of the books themselves. I claim that the main thrust of Harry Potter's attraction has mostly to do with its treatment of magic as a commodified technology, just as video games, television cyborgs, and fantasy role-playing games in "our world"

treat technology as magic. Insofar as morality is constructed in any of these terrains, it has very little to do with specific plot or imagery and more to do with the "kids' culture" Rushkoff (1996) described as "a delightful mixed-up common ground for all of these digital, magical, and biological sorts of development" (p. 109). This is not to say that young readers are more likely to be interested in the magic than the moral lessons of the books; rather, we can find a technology of morality that constructs identity as multiple and fluid. Because "technology" and "humanity" are overlapping and transgressive as categories in "our world," we can no longer talk about technology as a tool that is wielded in accordance with morality. Instead we must understand morality and technology as mutually constitutive.

In Harry Potter's world, surprises might be lurking in any place or thing. The trick is to ride it through and never give up the chance to have fun. This is the fate of the gundam child. Similarly, kids playing video games do not dwell on the plot, the characters, or what things might seem to be if one were to take a particular event or character as a "message" in some adult way. Take race, gender, or nationality, for example: "Kids routinely choose any and all . . . options and don't think twice about it," writes J. C. Herz (1997), "because the only factor in their decision is a given character's repertoire of kick-ass fighting moves. Ironically, all considerations of race, sex, and nationality are shunted aside in the videogame arena, where the only goal is to clobber everyone indiscriminately" (p. 166). Yet, as Herz points out, kids understand on a deeper level that they are "operating in a disembodied environment where your virtual skin doesn't have to match your physical one, and that you can be an Okinawan karate expert, a female Thai kick-boxer, a black street-fighter from the Bronx, or a six-armed alien from outer space, all within the span of a single game" (p. 166).

Herz notes that adults do not generally approach things this way; they might be disturbed by the idea of a cutesy Japanese schoolgirl committing gruesome, bloody maneuvers, or at least be aware in some semiconscious way that they are choosing this character. For children, however, writes Herz, "shuffling videogame bodies and faces is like playing with a remote control" (p. 167). Adults also tend to see the video games as preprogrammed and predetermined so that the limited selection of identity combinations and options suggests a particular story about identity to these adults. Recent video games, however, employ the "create a character" feature, in which it really does seem like any and all combinations are the goal. "The game starts, cycles through a bunch of avatars, and you punch the fire button when you see one you like. It's channel surfing" (p. 167). When children are imitating the moves of these characters, trying out the "cool" moves and identities, some adults become concerned that there is not a clear separation between the fantasy of the game or television program and the dreams of particular children. This is indeed the case for some children; it is also part of working through our cultural ideas about what "identity" is, and so it may be a necessary experience for children.

Harry Potter books reconstruct in analogous detail the pecking order of schoolground one-upmanship. You cannot just know the spell in Harry's world; you have to study it, practice it, and perfect it. And if you can learn a spell that others do not yet know, you are the coolest. What the Potter books do is destabilize the tension between acquisitive coolness and nerdiness because they take magic and turn it into techniques that can be learned. Thus, Hermione is not all that cool in the books even though she studies the most and learns the most spells because, within the context of the books, she is just a studious nerd in school. Yet other kids in the books who do not take on the characteristics of nerds but know more tricks than the others earn recognition and status. It can be cool to know more magic than other kids. It is pretty much the same outside the books; you must show you have incredibly detailed and specific knowledge that others do not yet have to stay ahead. It is not enough to be the first kid to own the *Sims*, a computer game in which one creates a whole simulated world of people and then manipulates how they interact. You have to know how to download the *Sim* guinea pig off the Net and use it to help two *Sim* families come together and start a new household. Herz (1997) emphasizes the importance of both the arcane knowledge and hand-to-eye coordination. And it is the same for Harry; he is always at the center of the fun because he is always looking for a new, esoteric detail. *Harry Potter* books are an education for the information economy in which everyone pays premium rates for narrow expertise and short-lived skills. Just as Harry will grab at the chance to use a secret map, so too will a first grader voraciously read *Nintendo* magazine, or a fourth grader search out the chat room where one can learn the most arcane code for *Tony Hawke's SkatePro* (a skateboarding video game). To the other characters in the books, Harry is cool not because he can talk to snakes—that is something he was born with—he is cool because he has an invisibility cloak and a really good

broomstick. (It is the case in these books that Harry Potter is famous; everyone knows the story of how the most powerful evil Voldemort was unable to kill Harry and that trying to kill the young lad caused Voldemort to lose much of his power and disappear. But in general, we see that most kids in the books find him peculiar and do not treat him as special in any particular way. A more subtle reading registers his fluctuating status; he is sometimes a hero, sometimes a suspect, but in either case, always "special." Outside of the books is another story; most readers identify with Harry in particular.)

Technology, in this sense, is nothing more than a trick, spell, or code; it lets you do things other people do not know about yet. And this is pretty much what MacDonald was referring to as the externalization of potential. As Rushkoff (1996) writes:

> When we look carefully at the reaction of younger cyber-denizens to their Sega-environs, we find that they make no distinction between information and matter, mechanics and thought, work and play, or even religion and commerce. In fact, kids on the frontier of the digital terrain have adopted some extraordinarily magical notions about the world we live in. Far from yielding a society of coldhearted rationalists, the ethereal, out-of-body experience of mediating technologies appears to have spawned a generation of pagan spiritualists whose dedication to technology is only matched by their enthusiasm for elemental truth and a neoprimitive, magical worldview. To a screenager, these are not opposing strategies but coordinated agents of change. (p. 109)

This harkens back to the Enlightenment epistemology that created a kind of confidence about a human being's place in the world even as he or she was decentered in that world because one could know all or understand all and harness it to human advantage. In this view, humans even have the role of controlling the world; if we could only realize this, we could fit into the natural world that is scientifically knowable. The irony is that this is the postmodern era, in which we are no longer supposed to be believing this. Supposedly, we no longer believe in the idea of eternal progress and, with the loss of this rudder, we have presumed the destruction of all of the accompanying beliefs, such as human "rationality," unlimited potential for control, and the ability to create a society in which both individual and collective will can be met. At the same time, there seem to be so many reasons to accept that these possibilities *can* be met through, for example, e-mail and other postmodern notions of Web technology.

The practice of control is almost always destructive; the *anime*/gundam heroes are a direct response. Yet this postmodern era is, in many ways, what Enlightenment people could only have imagined!

But life is not just a party of Enlightenment fulfillment. Kids find themselves in the midst of adult conflicts and power games even as they search out the next form of magic. They have to deal with the stupidity of the previous generation and its disturbing legacy of destructive forces. In this respect, the coordinated agents of change Rushkoff mentions must be employed to specific ends. If Harry can use his new Invisibility Cloak in fending off evil, he is no different from an *anime* heroine wearing her new suit, or a *WWF* character wielding her extra-super-finishing move. "And this is what it's about," writes Herz:

> as the cultural stream of East and West swirl into the Tastee-Freez of global entertainment. Mythic figures resonate, all the more if they're engaged in some kind of combat or action adventure, real or simulated, the most popular forms being basketball and videogames. They resonate for the same reasons mythic figures have always resonated. Only now, the audience numbers in the millions, and the object is not to celebrate ancestors or teach lessons or curry favor with the spirits. It's commerce. And the people transmitting their stories to the next generation aren't priests or poets or medicine women. They're multinational corporations. And they are not trying to appease the gods. They are trying to appease the shareholders. (p. 170)

It is not just video games, it is everything in our mass culture. We can just see it more clearly in video games. And we are just a little edgy about the attraction of this series of *Harry Potter* books. Violent entertainment is the most blatant form of popular culture, but it is all about taming mythic monsters. The difference with the video games is that the monsters are inside the games, and we can try them on ourselves. Such gods and monsters used to scare people. Now people manipulate the gods and monsters (see especially *Black and White*). So we see once again why Harry Potter is the character of the moment; he, too, trains and controls monsters and goblins just like a player of *Magic*, a player of the *Pokemon* card game, or a video game master.

In her writing, Herz seems to be claiming an evolution, a new breed of freaks that adults need to study and live with. Perhaps she agrees with Bruce Mazlish (1993) that, "In making machines, humans have become themselves Creators who endow their creations with movement."

> Automata . . . express this form of creation dramatically. An automobile, a locomotor, an airplane, these also move under human inspiration. Until the Renaissance, it appears . . . that Western Man [sic] built automata and other machines not so much to dominate nature, but to copy it; not to rival God, but to imitate him [sic]. Increasingly, however, in the West, humans came to smudge the image of God as the Creator and to substitute their own, first turning God into a Newtonian machine, and then merging him with nature as an evolutionary process. In doing so, humans united within themselves extraordinary powers of destruction . . . and of creation. Whether in taking on creative powers, humans are also able, in the form of their machines, to bring into being a new evolutionary step remains our next question. If Man [sic] succeeds in taking this step, he would certainly be doing something admittedly unique. (pp. 213–14)

Curriculum and the Technologies of Morality

Throughout, my main curriculum argument is that educators need to learn from children what it is they are experiencing—that ol' Margaret Mead adage that our contemporary situation is one of migration into a new culture; children are the translators while adults are the keepers of tradition. Adults need to learn from children in order to survive, yet children gain valuable narratives through which to interpret action by listening to stories of the old country from the elders. The "answer" for curriculum is not to try to compete with technoculture because we will always fail at the imitation; instead, we need to develop organized experiences that respond to life in and with technoculture. More proactive would be for educators to work toward a biculturalism, and finally for a diversity that embraces both traditions and the multiplicities of what Herz calls "superhero sushi." This includes adult cultures and technocultures, mass and consumer cultures, and youth subcultures, and cross-over memberships and participations in multiple cultures at once. At the same time, we must be wary of constructing teachers themselves as the *anime* heroines, themselves progenitors of technohyperbolic change. If teachers read the *Harry Potter* books and then fashion themselves as the wizards with the children as the magical beasts to be tamed, then teachers become the technochildren themselves. Indeed, teachers are often urged to try on new prototypes of technology in order to experience a new sense of their powers of perception, production, and destruction (e.g., new technologies of assessment, instruction, surveillance). At other times, they experience the melancholia of the gundam; they conceive themselves as capable of harnessing the

sometimes terrifying applications of scientistic pedagogical techniques in order to lead the student-monsters in an effort to save society from invasion or technological disasters (Appelbaum, 1999).

As the narratives reproduce themselves and their hegemonic themes, there is the parallel story in which we enter a new phase of cyborg technoculture. Even in this context, magic and technology are not distinct categories for children. They are attracted to technology for its ability to perform magic, and they are attracted to magic for its potential to be used as a tool.[7] In working with children, I find that magic is not special despite its amazing surprise or apparent impossibility; for a child, anything is possible. The intriguing thing is the secret of how it is done. It is no wonder to me that the *Harry Potter* books coincide with the unprecedented popularity of television specials in which magicians reveal their secrets, despite being exiled forever from the community of magicians. It is no longer the "magic" of magic, but the cleverness of the technique that matters. Whereas the technical ingenuity of a particular tool is no longer of interest, the technological possibility is replaced by the cleverness of the magic it can perform. Regardless of how incredible the actual task is, it is ordinary unless it is relatively unique, arcane, or unexpected.

O'Har (2000) turned to Jacques Ellul (1967) in working through the popularity of *Harry Potter*. If we imagine that magic and science were once "one," then we can create a narrative of their split; one path went the way of technique, into technology; material technique leads to a multiplication of discoveries, each based on the other and, thus, writes in itself a myth of progress. Magic, the other path, promotes only endless beginnings; it also answers all questions by preserving spirituality. The part of magic that was lost to our world in the dominance of science and technology was that aspect of magic that functioned in this spiritual realm. The fundamental message of *Harry Potter*, according to O'Har, is that magic saves Harry from turning into a Dursely; instead, it provides a whole new set of endless beginnings.

Oddly, though, these beginnings carry the trappings of everything we already know about how people live and work together. Here is the "literary beauty" of the school in the *Harry Potter* books; it is no better than any other school we know of simply by virtue of being school. Once magic is the subject matter it is nothing special. In its commodification, it has become another technology, another collection of technical skills to be mastered. Everything exciting, all of the real magic the children acquire,

comes from the technological tricks they need to perform outside of school. Outside the books, however, the magic (when read about) serves a different function. For us, reading along, it is the magic that captivates us because of its presentation as technology. This new technology, the magic, is ironically a technique for solving all of the problems that technology and science have always failed to solve. For us, too, the magic provides a set of beginnings. The difference between school for Harry and his friends and the schools that readers experience outside the books, however, is that everyone at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry is learning stuff that they know they will use (Block, 2001). Students at Hogwarts are training to be wizards, and they know that what they are learning will be useful to them in their lives.[8] Outside the books, the uses of school learning are remote at best, good for a promised future; inside the books, kids use what they have learned immediately to solve life-threatening puzzles and to save the fate of the world as we know it.

Technologies of the Self: Morality and Magic

A particularly powerful element of the *Harry Potter* books is the unification of Harry's self-knowledge with his self-care. Who is this Harry, where does he come from, why is he so important, and why is he at the center of so much good-evil carnage so many times in his life? Only by strapping on the technoculture of magic can he seek the self-knowledge that he, we, and everybody else crave. For example, Harry looks into the magic mirror and sees his family; indeed, he initially learns that he is a wizard through a message sent to him from Hogwarts. In this process of strapping on the magic, a process of externalizing and realizing his self-potential, he wields the tools that lead to self-understanding. Harry is a personified conflation of self-knowledge and self-care. His self-knowledge leads to care of the self, indeed saves his life; and, in taking care of himself and his potential, he is able to achieve self-knowledge. The books thus present what Michel Foucault (Martin et al., 1988) named a "technology of morality": the transformation of self by one's own means or with the help of others—that is, in the operations upon one's body, soul, thoughts, conduct, and way of being. Foucault postulated that this technology of morality enunciates a hierarchy between knowing oneself and taking care of oneself. Harry doesn't yet enunciate a hierarchy, and he therefore lives the more nuanced notion of morality that Foucault initially suggested. Harry's life project does not place knowing oneself above caring for oneself, nor does it value care of the self over knowing who he is. Either he has not been transformed yet (J. K. Rowling plans to write several more books for each of Harry's years at Hogwarts, so as this chapter is composed, there is no clear conclusion), or he is a symbol of a shift away from Foucault's binary toward an independent coexistence with the technology of morality. This is parallel to videogamers channel-surfing through the strategies of what, in adult terms, are violent images but in young people's terms are mere strategy games devoid of the realistic violence these young people say they would condemn. For *Harry Potter* fans, the convention of good-evil contestation is a context for the real cleverness and intrigue of the story, the details about how Harry and his friends collect more trinkets of magic in their quest to be "cool." Similarly, a fifth grader can buy status at recess by recounting details of last night's *WWF* show and claim he is not in the least interested in the "fake" violence, but instead in the intricacies of the particular combinations of moves that the fighters made. In any of these examples, the cultural shift has moved the focus away from the binary and the potential hierarchy to the placement of the binary in an independent context.

When magic is treated as technologies and technology is treated as magic, what can we say about the morality of magic and about the magic of morality? Self-development is an enlightenment project, and self-development leading to self-knowledge is, again, an enlightenment project. We can see this clearly in *Pokemon*. The main characters, Ash and his friends, and the other Pokemon trainers are traveling around looking to understand themselves, using different Pokemon to understand and strengthen themselves. The Pokemon that children train and fight with are externalizations of their inner drives and desires. Only in striving to become a true Pokemon trainer does an aspirant achieve, eventually, self-knowledge and the ability to care for oneself. So we are again up against this idea that postmodern technoculture is spawning a fulfillment of Enlightenment fantasy. If we think about the degree of bourgeois optimism that was so prevalent in the nineteenth century—that by knowing things you could enrich yourself, make yourself happier, and be a better person, and in the process implicitly help society and if we think about the role of this technology of morality in supporting the accomplishment of cultural forms of optimism like capitalism and industrialization, it is possible to understand why and how this new scientific optimism and notions of new possibilities through technologies can blind us to terrible things

that are going on in the world, such as genocides, slave labor in factories, or environmental racism. People are smugly not thinking about horrible famines in Ethiopia and instead are celebrating their technological power, a wealth-plus-knowledge equation that enables them to do what they want when they want in the world through technology—which is magic! In the end, the morality of magic is an Enlightenment ideology of postmodern technoculture. And this is Harry Potter's world. In the books, there are really serious concerns about the impending triumph of the dark arts to contend with; outside the books, we can turn our local concerns into major focal points for self-development and ignore the major ethical concerns that plague our postmodern world.

Children growing up in a state of enlightenment technoculture may indeed experience the technologies of morality as both a blinding scientific optimism and a more immediate celebration of individual prosthetic enhancement. As consumers of books, children are represented in our culture as a "hostile audience" since they are depicted as choosing other forms of entertainment over reading a new book. As science fiction and fantasy increasingly permeate the entertainment of children, adolescents, and young adults, members of contemporary society are effectively growing up in a fantasyland. It becomes imperative to analyze examples of these popular forms of entertainment (no matter how inconsequential or artless they may at first appear); we should understand what we are learning from these stories, and what sorts of adults we are becoming as a result (Westfahl, 2000). Yet I believe that the most important use of the popular is an interrogation of the culture through the popular. One significant feature of the *Harry Potter* phenomenon is the presence of continued items in a series and the need to continually market to an audience of consumers who will "need" to buy the next product, whether this product is a new book in the series, a home design product, a video game, a film based on the books, or fanware. Advertising and promotion of products have become the dominant element of the *Harry Potter* culture since the first book. One might posit children as social change agents in turning the books into major marketing products through word-of-mouth advertising. Yet the overriding nature of consumer culture is that one is trying to sell something to a cynical audience. As adults purchase a *Harry Potter* T-shirt because of its connection to reading a book, children want the T-shirt for its value as a commodity. However, for both, the T-shirt serves as a symbol of membership in a cultural subgroup.

Reading *Harry Potter* with children requires more than reading the books. Reading includes participation in and reflexive analysis of all forms of cultural text. Indeed, reading especially means interpreting the uses of fanware. This chapter has focused mainly on the introduction of the *Harry Potter* phenomenon through the books themselves because the fanware hype occurred mostly after the success of the books. Nevertheless, as we look forward to understanding what the *Harry Potter* books can teach us about ourselves, we will need to address more carefully these multiple sites of meaning beyond the books. The multiple "texts" of *Harry Potter* can be popular only if they are open enough to admit a range of negotiated readings through which various social groups can find meaningful articulations of their own relationship to the dominant ideology (Fiske, 1987). The "dominant reader" identifies with Harry, the hero, and can believe that everyone might just have magic in them. If we play down the fact that many muggles do not get an invitation to Hogwarts, while some wizard folk, squibs, are unfortunately lacking, we might just hope that hard work and careful practice can help us get ahead. The dominant reading maintains a commonsense belief in meritocracy. Negotiated readings emerge when people make use of the images presented to interpret their own lives, as when readers think of the ways they are like and unlike Hermione, or why they would never be able to become a teacher like Snape. Issues of class and race, underplayed by the dominant reader, may be foregrounded in negotiated readings. If the negotiation is more "against" than "with" the text, then a reader might use the texts as blatantly sexist or racist, or perhaps antireligious.

In any reading of the texts of *Harry Potter*, however, we will find magic and technology confused, or thrown into disarray, to be unraveled and comprehended in ways that are consistent with the reading that emerges. Arthur Weasley, who works for the Ministry of Magic, eccentrically collects electric plugs and batteries, and he secretly keeps a flying car until it ends up in a magic forest in a later book. The Dursleys want nothing to do with magic and fill their home with all of the latest technological gadgets and toys one could ever want.[9] It is Vernon Dursely who points out the peculiar place of technology in the arts of magic; in the end, it is technology that is the symbol of one's path to wizardry, as everyone takes the Hogwarts Express train to get to this school of witchcraft and wizardry. He asks why wizards need to take a train. He never gets his answer. Harry's story provides the larger context; in the end, technology/magic has

to do with who one is and what one does. And because who one is and what one does is so intertwined with the technologies of magic and the magic of technology in the service of self-knowledge and self-care, who one is and what one does is a technology of morality and an essential node of the construction of ethics.

Hogwarts confronts the ethics of magic and science directly. Its purpose is to help its students harness and focus their powers. These powers might be called magic or they might be called technology; but in this case they are called magic. The problem for the educators in the books is that they cannot be certain that people (wizards) will use these powers for the common good. It boils down to a choice between the common good and the dark arts. And so we are confronted with the evil of Voldemort and the always-present danger of evil triumphing over good. Hogwarts was founded by four wizards, one of whom, Salazar Slytherin, at least dabbled and perhaps reveled in the dark arts. He used his powers for questionable, if not specifically evil, purposes. (For centuries many of the young wizards who reside in Slytherin House have exhibited the same tendency.) Albus Dumbledore, who heads the school, needs to figure out how to train students not just in the "technology" of magic but also in the moral discernment necessary to avoid the continual reproduction of the few great Dark Lords like Voldemort and their multitudinous followers. The problem is exacerbated by the presence of faculty members who are not wholly unsympathetic with Voldemort's aims.

Good and evil are not just cartoonized in the books. As Alan Jacobs writes, Harry Potter is unquestionably good; yet a key component of his virtue arises from his recognition that he is not inevitably good. When first-year students arrive at Hogwarts, they come to an assembly of the entire school, students and faculty. Each of them sits on a stool in the midst of the assembly and puts on a large, battered old hat—the Sorting Hat—which decides which of the four houses the student will enter. After unusually long reflection, the Sorting Hat, to Harry's great relief, puts him in Gryffindor, but not before telling him that he could achieve real greatness in Slytherin. This comment haunts Harry; he often wonders if Slytherin is where he truly belongs, among the pragmatists, the careerists, the manipulators and deceivers, the power-hungry, and the just plain nasty. Near the end of the second book, after his third terrifying encounter with Voldemort, he confesses his doubts to Dumbledore.

"So I *should* be in Slytherin," Harry said, looking desperately into Dumbledore's face. "The Sorting Hat could see Slytherin's power in me, and it—"

"Put you in Gryffindor," said Dumbledore calmly. "Listen to me, Harry. You happen to have many qualities Salazar Slytherin prized in his hand-picked students. Resourcefulness . . . determination . . . a certain disregard for rules," he added, his moustache quivering again. "Yet the Sorting Hat placed you in Gryffindor. You know why that was. Think."

"It only put me in Gryffindor," said Harry in a defeated voice, "because I asked not to go in Slytherin. . . ."

"Exactly," said Dumbledore, beaming once more, " . . . which makes you very different from [Voldemort]. It is our choices, Harry, that show what we truly are, far more than our abilities." Harry sat motionless in his chair, stunned.

Harry is stunned because he realizes for the first time that his confusion has been wrongheaded from the start; he has been asking the question, "Who am I at heart?" when he needed to be asking the question, "What must I do in order to become what I should be?" His character is not a fixed, preexistent thing, but something that he has the responsibility for making. "In this sense," writes Jacobs, "the strong, [Enlightenment] tendency of magic to become a dream of power makes it a wonderful means by which to focus the choices that gradually but inexorably shape us into certain distinct kinds of persons."

In the *Harry Potter* books, magic is often fun, often surprising and exciting, but also always potentially dangerous—much like the technology outside the books that has resulted from the "victory" of experimental science. The technocrats of this world hold in their hands powers almost infinitely greater than those of Albus Dumbledore and Voldemort; how worried are we about them and their influence over our children? If we could only measure technique by other criteria than those of technique itself. *Harry Potter* is more helpful than most children's literature in prompting such ethical and cultural reflection.

Notes

1. After weeks on the *New York Times* bestseller list, *Harry Potter* books found themselves on the newly created list of "Children's Best Sellers." Thus *Harry* ushered in a new awareness of the field of children's literature and the need to pay attention to the field as a major market niche. But more important, *Harry* books found themselves as markers of a new boundary, effectively denying it "real" status even as it was celebrated as a cultural phenomenon. No longer a book for adults, it continued to be read by many "older" readers. See Kathy Mahy's chapter elsewhere in this volume.

2. Filk are new words to well-known songs, sung together by fans at gatherings.

3. *Gundam* is a teem from Japanese animation for the hero who dons technology in order to fight the unleashed threats resulting from previous human efforts with technology and science.

4. See Charles Esler's chapter in this volume.

5. See Heather Sevarty and Deborah Taub's chapter, this volume.

6. How do you cope with the aggravarion from strongly religious people against witchcraft? J. K. Rowling: "Well, mostly I laugh about it I ignore it . . . and very occasionally I get annoyed, because they have missed the point so spectacularly. I think rhe Harry books are very moral but some people just object to witchcraft being mentioned in a children's book unfortunately, that means we'll have to lose a lot of classic children's fiction." (Comic Relief 2001)

Q: What are your feelings towards the people who say your books are to do with cults and telling people to become witches? (reader's question, didn't give name)

A: Alfie. Over to you. Do you feel a burning desire to become a witch?

Alfie: No.

A: I thought not. I think this is a case of people grossly underestimating children. Again. (Southwest News 2000)

7. "Any smoothly functioning technology gives the appearance of magic." Quote attributed to Arthur C. Clarke (Jacobs, 2000).

8. ***Hogwarts School Song:*** *Hogwarts, Hogwarts, Hoggy Warty Hogwarts/Teach us something, please/Whether we be old and bald/Or young with stabby knees/Our heads could do with filling/With some interesting stuff/For now they're bare and full of air/Dead flies and bits of fluff/So teach us things worth knowing/Bring back what we've forgot/Just do your best, we'll do the rest/And learn until our brains all rot.* ("And now, before we go to bed, let us sing the school song! Everyone pick their favorite tune and off we go!")

9. Toys in Dudley Dursley's spare bedroom: computer, PlayStation, two televisions, racing bike, video camera, remote control airplane, large numbers of computer games (including MegaMutilation Three), VCR, gold wristwatch, working model tank, bird in a cage, air rifle, tortoise, sports bag, books (unused), computerized robot.

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Articles

THE SECRETS OF HARRY POTTER

Reviewed by **Gail A. Grynbaum**

J.K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* ,New York, Scholastic Press, 1997.
Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets, New York, Scholastic Press, 1999.
Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban, New York, Scholastic Press, 1999.
Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire, New York, Scholastic Press, 2000.

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THE SORCERER'S APPRENTICESHIP

The four Harry Potter books that have recently taken the American publishing industry by storm are part of a projected seven-volume British fairy tale series about magic, individuation, and the mundus imaginalis. They record the coming of age of an intuitive boy, in which the traditional young hero's journey is woven through an unfamiliar hermetic world, engaging masters of liminality and wizardly sophistication in the effort to balance the forces of good and evil. Recently, a friend and I were discussing the world-wide, across-age, Harry Potter phenomenon, and how it has occasioned a rise of reading zest in kids, especially boys. He had asked his 10 year old son Sam-- previously an avid nonreader--what made him such a Harry Potter devotee. Sam's quick response was "he takes me to another world." That J.K. Rowling has been able to tap into even men's longing for the world of the imagination adds to the secret mystique of the Harry Potter series and its universal appeal.

These tales were categorized by the publishing industry as children's books. But as friends and colleagues began to talk about them, I became intrigued. Upon entry into the world of Harry Potter, I was soon enchanted, caught up like so many of us in the alive, visceral experience of reading. The real surprise for me, as an analytical psychotherapist, was the psychological and symbolic depth that emanated from the images in the books. The more I

focused on their alchemical, dreamlike images, the greater was their capacity to release psychological energy. This was an alchemical reading experience, a revelation of secrets and strata previously reserved to the contemplation of the woodcuts in Jung's essays on alchemy or to the Jungian analysis of dreams.

For the uninitiated, Harry Potter is the boy hero of the tales, a recently enrolled student at the Hogwarts School for Witchcraft and Wizardry. When he was an infant, the boy's parents, both great wizards, were killed by a dark sorcerer, Lord Voldemort. Orphaned, Harry was forced to live with cruel "Muggle" (non-wizard) relatives until he was informed of his heritage and transported to Hogwarts. There he is finally able to realize his native gifts through a sorcerer's apprenticeship under the tutelage of Headmaster Dumbledore.

At school, Harry goes through his Training with two new friends, Hermione Granger, a soror mystica who is also a lively, challenging presence, and Ron Weasley, a good brother figure. There is also a student foe, Draco Malfoy. These four young people, each with a distinct and developing personality, must cope with the tutelage of the colorful adult characters, such as Headmaster Albus Dumbledore, Rubeus Hagrid, Professor Minerva McGonagall, as well as the sinister Lord Voldemort, and a few ghosts and pets. Hogwarts is evidently more than a school for wizards; it is the crucible for the development of Harry's capacity to become a contemporary shaman.

J.K. Rowling has said that she plans to write a total of seven volumes, each book intended to contain Harry's initiatory ordeals over a single academic year, ending with High School. The number seven is an apt one to mirror a shaman's journey; seven is frequently used in fairy tales and spiritual/ religious texts to refer to the completion of a cycle that symbolizes dynamic wholeness. In ancient Egypt seven, which analytical psychologist's today think of as signifying initiation, was the symbol of eternal life. What Harry is undergoing in the course of these books is nothing else but the development of the ability of a mediumistic nature to survive in two worlds.

The magical parallel world that seems as if it is just "on the other side" of the everyday world is the environment in which the stories unfold, once they get fully underway at Hogwarts. The tales have the internal consistency of a dream atmosphere, in which each detail is allowed both to speak for itself and to become a signpost towards another level. The universe spun by Rowling, the Scottish woman new to authorship, resembles "The Dreaming" of the Australian Aboriginals and yet never quite loses its connection with the British dayworld of tea, sports, and competition.

Fortunately the same language is spoken on both sides of the imaginal divide, although Rowling developed a new vocabulary to enable characters to describe experiences that were foreign to dayworld "Muggles." The author introduced enough of a lexicon that one dedicated fan has developed a Harry Potter website, called the "Encyclopaedia Potteratica." Rowling has said that her neologisms came to her in the manner that she imagines colors must emerge from the palette of an Impressionist painter trying to capture a landscape on canvas: the hue is called forth by what is already there. (Diane Rehm Show, October 20, 1999, National Public Radio)

To move into the Hogwarts setting, Harry and the other students must shift into another reality. Harry and his fellow initiates come to London's King Cross Station and must cross through an invisible barrier leading to a secret platform, number nine and three-quarters, to catch the Hogwarts Express. The "non-Muggle" world of Hogwarts is one where pictures and paintings are animated, brooms fly, time is three dimensional, animals speak, owls are the mail carriers, and people can transform themselves into animals. The threshold between the Muggle and Hogwarts worlds is via the Leaky Cauldron cafe, which is located on Knockturn Alley and Diagon Alley; visitors, in other words, need to move "nocturnally" and "diagonally" into this imaginal space.

In his studies of the archetypes energizing the collective unconscious, C.G. Jung found that the individuation journey is reflected in the "operations" of alchemical processes and the dynamic motifs of mythology and fairy tales. Rowling's ingenious use of details and themes from these sources establishes the contemporary symbolic environment in which the characters undergo their ordeals. Three archetypal themes that have emerged from her tale so far are: the Orphan, the Vampire,
and the Resilient Young Masculine. These forces speak to us as we read the Harry Potter stories, and they provide the key to Harry's particular pattern of initiatory individuation.

In his adventures, Harry's primary task is to learn the skills that will enable him to navigate between worlds, whether these be conceived as Muggle and Wizard, student and teacher, upper and lower, or inner and outer. As his Pilgrim's Progress proceeds, he must draw upon the resources implied by the figures of Orphan, Vampire, and Resilient Young Masculine.

THE ALCHEMY OF THE ORPHAN

Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone, the enchanting first volume, is bathed in alchemical operations and symbolism. In Great Britain, the title was more properly, Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone, (it was changed for the American audience to the "Sorcerer's Stone.") Rowling simmers her characters and plot in a medieval retort that provides the perfect magical medium in which to initiate Harry's individuation process. In each of the books the three worlds of images described in alchemy, the black (nigredo,) the white (albedo,) and the red (rubedo) are present and form an essential part of the mood and energy of the plots.

The first book limns the container and the key elements that will undergo the varied alchemical processes. The story is about a search for an alchemical Philosopher's Stone that is both literal and metaphoric. From the first step into the tale the reader feels the tension of opposing forces-- love and abuse, community and orphan. As if embodying the transcendent function itself, Harry must find a way to survive and grow beyond the collision of opposites in his life.

As an infant Harry was wounded by Lord Voldemort during the murderous slaughter of his famous wizard parents, Lily and James Potter. A lightning-bolt scar on his tiny forehead was the only visible mark from the attack. Voldemort was said to have lost his powers and vanished after his effort to kill Harry failed. However, whenever evil is nearby, Harry experiences a terrifying, painful pull inside the remaining scar, as though he is being

energetically drawn away from the upper world.

The thunderbolt, mythically symbolic of the spark of life and enlightenment was hurled by Zeus down to earth as a dramatic symbol of that god's dual capacity for creation and destruction. Harry's wound was the first evidence of a shamanic calling as well as the battleground between enormous conflicting forces within his young body and psyche. Increasingly in the stories, Harry's private experience of the opposites representing good and evil becomes reflected in the external struggles.

Harry's parents, with an aura of King and Queen, are a profound absent presence; their actual absence aches in their son's unconscious and they appear to him in dreams, visions, and visitations. Their names, James and Lily, carry mythological symbolism. St. James was the patron saint of alchemists and physicians. According to Spanish legend, St. James defeated Hermes in battle and took charge of his secret knowledge. (Alexander Roob, Alchemy & Mysticism:The Hermetic Museum, Koln, Taschen, 1997, p. 700) The lily represents heavenly purity, a promise of immortality and salvation, and in medieval iconography was seen as a symbol for the Virgin Mary. (J.E. Cirlot, A Dictionary of Symbols, New York, Dorset Press, 1971, p. 189)

Harry's early orphan life was spent alone in a cupboard under the stairs. The hero-child is nearly always portrayed as abandoned in myths and fairy tales, but Marie-Louise Von Franz cautions in The Interpretation of Fairy Tales, that we should not interpret this through the lens of personal neurosis of the abused and neglected child we have all come to know so well from the lore of psychotherapy, but leave it in an archetypal context to mine for deeper meaning. That is, "namely that the new God of our time is always to be found in the ignored and deeply unconscious corner of the psyche (the birth of Christ in a stable.)" (Rev. edition, Boston, Shambhala, 1996, p. viii)

Nevertheless, Harry's cruel step-family kept him in miserable deprivation, and the boy often felt consumed with anger and frustration. On the other hand, the endurance of a painful and isolated childhood helped forge his (and many readers) character. As Edward Edinger says, in reference to one of the key alchemical operations, "The fire of calcinatio is a purging, whitening fire. It acts on the black stuff, the nigredo....Psychologically... development will be promoted by the frustration of pleasure and power...." (*Anatomy of the Psyche, Alchemical Symbolism in Psychotherapy*, La Salle, Illinois, Open Court, 1985, pp. 26, 27)

Harry grows up as a spirited yet lonely boy who, like many orphans and other alienated children, fantasizes about being rescued by someone special who will recognize him for his true value. It isn't just unruly hair, physical incoordination, or broken glasses that set him apart from others. Early on, Harry notices he has unusual talents, such as an ability to talk to snakes at the zoo, that position him uncomfortably between two worlds. He later learns that this linguistic gift was passed to him in the clash with Voldemort.

On the boy's eleventh birthday, Rubeus Hagrid, a messenger from the wizards, arrives with news that Harry is to come to Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry for the next stage of his Training. In preparation for Hogwarts, Harry has to shop for his school supplies and, most importantly, a wand. In the magic shop, the wand that is to be his, chooses

him. It is made from one of a pair of feathers from a phoenix tail; the other tail feather from the same bird is said to have gone into Voldemort's wand, the very wand that gave Harry the defining head scar.

Harry's instincts quicken as he absorbs into his body the energetic connection to the dark side represented by the link between these two wands and their owners. As he becomes conscious of carrying this connection, he feels his skin prickle with fear. Harry has received yet another signal of his liminal position between the thrusts of the two worlds. He must find a way to straddle yet penetrate these two opposites. The phoenix is the mythological bird known for periodic destruction and re-creation.

The boy is anxious since he knows that because of his heritage, many expect great deeds from him, even though he still lacks knowledge about wizardry. Hagrid looks at him and says, with words that nod towards the primal appeal of these stories: "Don' you worry Harry. You'll learn fast enough. Everyone starts at the beginning at Hogwarts, you'll be just fine. Just be yerself." (*Sorcerer's Stone*, p. 86)

With leaden legs, Harry boards the Hogwarts Express train to School. The story unfolds with his movement towards the magical world. In one of the best scenes, Harry gets introduced to the wizard ancestor world by his new friend Ron via "animated" collectible cards. Figures like medieval French alchemists Nicolas and Perenelle Flamel, Arthurian fairy Morgana, Swiss alchemist Paracelsus and Arthurian magician Merlin add their energy to the metaphysical alembic being established. The archetypal images come alive as we read.

The characters begin to cook together and the environment reflects the blackening descent into the seat of the unconscious. The train spirals from rolling plains into deep woods, carved by twisting rivers under a dark purple sky. The train arrives at Hogwarts Castle which sits high atop a mountain next to a black lake. Hogwarts is the image of the secure new home, "the place where soul and Self meet, the Home that is the heart of the new order." (Marion Woodman, *The Ravaged Bridegroom*, Toronto, Inner City Books, 1990, p. 205)

QUIDDITCH PLAYER OF THE SOUL

The students arrive and are faced with their first rite of passage. As in the alchemical operation of separatio, the youths are sorted by an enchanted, speaking hat. When placed on their head, the hat directs them to one of four Houses where they will live, each House known for a particular wizardly virtue: Bravery, Loyalty, Wisdom, and Cunning. The conical hat seems to represent the young peoples' orientation towards new ideas and world view. Harry is chosen for the "brave" Gryffindor House, although the Sorting Hat recognizes his dual nature, saying he would also do well in the "cunning" Slytherin House, known for producing dark wizards.

Harry begins his training with classes in History of Magic, Charms, Transfiguration, Potions, and Broom Flying. He is truly a whiz on the broomstick and is quickly selected for the most important position (the Seeker) on Gryffindor House's Quidditch team. For the first time in his life, Harry is valued for his instincts, and athletic in the exercise of them. The

ecstatic experience of Quidditch is the leap into Harry's shamanic training.

Quidditch, a fast game with three balls and played on flying broomsticks, resembles a cross between cricket and basketball. The Seeker needs to catch the third ball, a small gold one with tiny fluttering silver wings which is called the Golden Snitch. The arduous effort to catch the elusive golden ball is much like the individuation journey to find the Philosopher's Stone in alchemy and makes the Snitch the most important ball of the game. Like a Mayan warrior on the ball courts, Harry knows he is involved in a sacred act. We watch him become a Quidditch player of the soul.

In the air, on his Nimbus 2000 broom, this intuitive boy with his eager body finds his true home. He is an ambitious and hard working adept. Harry's studies take him to varied levels: through hidden tunnels, up in the air, or down watery pipes. When nooks and crannies get too dark, he waves his trusty wand and calls out for "Lumos," light. Sometimes he moves with the invisibility cloak that once belonged to his father, and at other times he place-shifts with the help of transporting "floo" powder. Harry embodies resilience in learning the skills necessary to move with agility through the strata.

The relationship of the trio of school friends, Harry, Ron, and Hermione, is vital to each of them, and they spend their time talking, arguing, and exploring together. They express their feelings of elation, isolation, fear, anger, and tenderness to each other. Although not competitive, they challenge each other. This related two boy, one girl family is a poignant central attraction of the series in these alienated times, a reminder to many readers who have felt alone since early childhood, of the lost archetype of comradeship.

J.K. Rowling says that she modeled Hermione on herself at eleven. Hermione has been an outsider most of her life, since she was a witch with unrecognized special talents raised in a Muggle family; at Hogwarts she initially overcompensates by studying all the time. She is certainly self-reliant, the smartest and highest achieving student, organized, focused, and filled with integrity. Perhaps this girl with sparkling, disciplined intellect, who is hard driving even though she lives in a liminal zone, has the name "Hermione" because it is the female form of "Hermes." In each of the books, Hermione is repeatedly the truth-sleuth, comfortable in the library, who finds the clue that makes sense of the mystery at hand. She is always the one standing at a crossroads pointing the way.

In The Sorcerer's Stone, Hermione researches the name Nicolas Flamel and discovers that he is an alchemist, over 600 years old and Professor Dumbledore's colleague. Flamel, it turns out, possesses the only Philosopher's Stone in existence; this Stone has the dual capacity to transform base metals into gold and to produce the Elixir of Life which gives the drinker immortality (viz Flamel's own longevity). The trio of friends learn that the Stone is hidden in the Castle.

Hermione is able to stand up for her beliefs to Harry and Ron and is not as prankish or immature as the boys. The two boys value her keen insights and persistence. She also has a close mentor relationship with Quidditch-loving Assistant Headmistress Minerva McGonagall. As the books progress, Hermione becomes more relaxed and emotionally expressive.

One of Harry's early psychological tasks is to encounter and reflect on the loss of his parents and to suffer his consequent identity as orphan, survivor, and savior. One night while looking into a magical mirror he sees his entire family, like guardian spirits, waving at him. He feels a "powerful kind of ache inside him, half joy, half terrible sadness." (*Sorcerer's Stone*, p. 209) Professor Albus Dumbledore comes out of the shadows of the room. The silver-bearded elder, who oversees Harry's training, tells the youth that the mirror shows the deep, most desperate desire of the heart but it does not give truth or knowledge; Harry must not dwell on his yearnings and forget to live. He must put his energy into his life.

This in alchemical terms, is a "whitening," an albedo time of reflection and discovery of the positive side of a dark fate for Harry. It is also a time to experience the transformative power of Hermes-Mercury, the trickster companion of souls to the underworld, protector of travelers, and the master of legerdemain. "The trickster is ideally suited to be an agent of transformation because he/she carries both sides of a split in the psyche. The trickster is evil and good, loving and hateful, male and female, and thus holds the opposites together while also keeping them differentiated." (Donald E. Kalsched, *The Inner World of Trauma*, London, Routledge, 1996, p. 189)

It is time for Harry to learn more about the trickster, and author Rowling's lesson plan for him calls for greater involvement with the mercurial Rubeus Hagrid, the giant, black-bearded, unpredictable yet endearing Keeper of Keys at Hogwarts. This inhabitant of liminal space is Master Wizard Albus Dumbledore's special messenger. Hagrid has a way of getting embroiled with the incarnations of Lord Voldemort and plays a pivotal role as he weaves close to conscious and unconscious spaces stirring the energies together and agitating Harry to greater depths and steeper edges.

THE VAMPIRE AND PSYCHIC POSSESSION

Each encounter that Harry has with Voldemort or one of his avatars becomes darker. In the Forbidden Forest with Hagrid, Harry suddenly comes upon a horrific scene of a cloaked figure with blood dripping from its mouth, leaning over an open wound on the dead body of a gleaming white unicorn. It is drinking the animal's blood. Harry is rescued by a centaur who tells him that Lord Voldemort is nearby and, thirsting for immortality, is after the Stone. Von Franz, in *Archetypal Dimensions of the Psyche*, says that anyone who earns the gratitude of animals, or whom they help for any reason, invariably wins out....It is psychologically of the utmost importance, because it means that in the conflict between good and evil the decisive factor is our animal instinct or animal soul; anyone who has it with him is victorious.... (Boston, Shambhala, 1994, p. 89)

Killing a unicorn is a desperate vampiric measure since the unicorn is a sacred creature. As the centaur says:

> Only one who has nothing to lose, and everything to gain, would commit such a crime. The blood of the unicorn will keep you alive, even if you are an inch from death, but at a terrible price. You have slain something pure and defenseless to save yourself, and you will have a half-life, a cursed life,

> from the moment the blood touches your lips. (*Sorcerer's Stone*,p. 258)

In alchemy, the unicorn symbolizes the path to the Philosopher's gold.

The vampire myth is like a deep vein that pulses through the Potter stories. The vampire as an archetypal motif and image has been present in many cultures throughout the world for over 3000 years. The character of Voldemort here represents the dark demonic energy that thrusts Harry towards his spirals of initiations. Like Lord Voldemort, the Vampire, is foremost a dehumanized shapeshifter who although appearing in a variety of guises, has the primal urge to suck the blood, soul and libido of others to revivify himself. His frightening visage communicates an overpowering doom and depressive despair. Harry is terrified that if Voldemort gets the Stone he will come back to power. He decides he must fight him. Ron and Hermione worry that Harry will be expelled. But Harry operates out of a far deeper level of fear:

> don't you understand?... I [have to get the Stone] If I get caught before I can get to the Stone, well, I'll have to go back to the Dursleys and wait for Voldemort to find me there, it's only dying a bit later than I would have, because I'm never going over to the Dark Side! (p. 270)

Descending into the sinuous bowels of the School through a series of traps set by different teachers to protect the Stone, the three friends figure out how to navigate the dangers, each time passing through another door. Harry goes into the last dark chamber alone, knowing he must face the danger ahead. Inside he encounters his Defense against Dark Arts teacher, who declares that he has allowed his body to become possessed by Voldemort so they can get the Stone. Afterwards, he and Voldemort plan to kill Harry. The teacher confesses: "Lord Voldemort showed me...there is no good or evil, there is only power." (p. 291) As the teacher removes his hat and turns his back to the boy, Harry is face-to-face with a monstrous, chalky, snake-like visage: Voldemort. He hisses

> See what I have become?...Mere shadow and vapor...I have form only when I can share another's body...but there have always been those willing to let me into their hearts and minds....once I have the Elixir of Life, I will be able to create a body of my own.... (p.293)

Like a vampire, he needs another body on which to feed. Harry feels the heat of his rage and terror rise. The "man with the two faces" tries to strangle Harry. The emboldened boy fights back, seeing how the creature can't touch him without receiving scalding burns. In a power coniunctio of conflicting passions, both desperately fight for their lives, and suddenly Harry blacks out. This is the alchemical rubedo stage of his journey, in which libido, heat, and opposing elements melt together to form the Gold of the boy's ripened consciousness. This is the moment of death for the old attitude of helplessness in the orphan, and a birth of the new seasoned strength of the Initiate. Harry revives. Headmaster Dumbledore has rescued him and explains that the creature couldn't touch Harry without getting burned.

> Your mother died to save you. If there is one thing Voldemort cannot understand, it is love. ...to have been loved so deeply, even though the person who loved us is gone, will give us some protection forever. It is in your very skin.... It was agony to touch a person marked by something so good." (p. 299)

Like Merlin who trained the orphan King Arthur, Dumbledore is a master wizard overseeing Harry's training. Helping Harry to move through the doorways into deeper chambers of his growth, Dumbledore is the alchemist who maintains the perfect balance of temperature and pressure in his adept's retort. Dumbledore doesn't under or over-manage Harry's training; he keeps the youth on edge to encourage the development of his self-reliance and skills. Understanding more about the sacrifices in his past, Harry develops a special relationship with this wise "Headmaster" and grows in his understanding of the real nature of the Elixir of Life.

The second volume in the series, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, takes the reader into yet deeper layers of the archetypal themes of the Orphan and Vampire. The Dickensian Dursley stepfamily return as characters and continue to treat him as though his magical powers were a disgusting anomaly. The outsider experience of personal isolation, the xenophobic threat of "the foreigner," and the projection of the shadow are all viscerally portrayed in this volume. A notion of elitist superiority was hinted at in *The Sorcerer's Stone*, in comments by Slytherin Draco Malfoy to Harry such as "You'll soon find out some wizarding families are much better than others..." (p. 108) By now the whispers have turned to threats. When Harry returns to School there is a growing movement led by the Slytherins to intimidate all the Hogwarts students who were born into "impure" Muggle families. They are considered to be "Mudbloods."

The sense of danger is everywhere. A puzzling force is loose and attacks students by turning them into stone; they are being petrified. Harry hears a horrifying, bone chilling voice that seeps out of the walls saying "Come...come to me...Let me rip you....Let me tear you...Let me kill you." (*Chamber of Secrets*, p. 120) And Harry is the only one who can hear and understand it.

The curse of petrifaction weaves the Medusa myth into the fabric of the story. "Medusa's eyes were so glaring that they turned to stone whomever looked into them."(Jean Chevalier, Alain Gheerbrant, *Dictionary of Symbols*, London, Penguin Books, 1994, p. 940) A highly polished shield like a mirror, was used to kill her. The mirror allows reflection, with the light of consciousness, on the unseen power in us that is enlarged and projected onto another.

In a heightened state of anxiety, the students go to their History of Magic class. Prodded by ever-curious Hermione, Professor Binns describes how Hogwarts was established over one thousand years ago by two wizards, Godric Gryffindor and Salazar Slytherin, and two witches, Helga Hufflepuff and Rowena Ravenclaw. "They built the castle together, far from prying Muggle eyes, for it was an age when magic was feared by common people, and witches and wizards suffered much persecution." (*Chamber of Secrets*, p. 150)

We learn, along with the class, that an ideological controversy developed

between Slytherin and the others around "magical" superiority. Slytherin wanted to restrict sorcery education to heirs of pure-blood wizard families and to reject all students from mixed or "Muggle" families. Ultimately, Slytherin left the school but before his departure he built a secret chamber, which housed a horrific serpent whose power only his true heir could unleash. It would then be used to purge the school of all unworthy mudbloods. Somehow, the Chamber of Secrets, last opened fifty years earlier, has been re-opened. A new chapter in "Muggle cleansing" has arrived .

Harry realizes that he alone understands the special "voice" in the walls because he can speak snake language. Apparently this linguistic talent, one of the marks of a dark wizard, was one for which Salazar Slytherin was famous. Like the phoenix feather on his wand, Harry once again is reminded that he has one foot in the Darkness of the underworld and the other in the Light of the upper world.

Harry finds the secret diary of Tom Riddle, a boy who was a student at Hogwarts fifty years ago, when the Chamber was last opened. Riddle, like Harry, came from "mixed" parentage and was an orphan. Riddle, who hates his parents, is like a dark mirror image of Harry. The Riddle boy brings Harry into his memory through the diary, to show him the Hogwarts of fifty years earlier. This revenant tricks Harry into believing that he is trustworthy. Rowling's four dimensional, cyberspace-like use of time in this section is an imaginative move into another reality.

Like the scapegoating and projection of evil throughout history, the movement towards ethnic cleansing of Hogwarts gains momentum. Ron's younger sister, Ginny, gets abducted into the Chamber. Harry and Ron decide they must go and attempt her rescue.

Towards the climactic endings of each of her tales, Rowling uses evocative body-based images, involving the senses, breathe, eyes, and sound to heighten the mounting pace of the instinctual-archetypal battle ahead. In this story, the boys descend into the dank catacombs of the School. They pass a massive twenty-foot snakeskin shed by the serpent and come to a solid wall on which two emerald-eyed entwined snakes are carved--a horrific caduceus. Again, echoes of Harry's initiatory ordeal are audible in the dark tunnels; the snakeskin that is shed yearly recalls the process of death and rebirth.

Alone inside the darkened Chamber, Harry sees Ginny, nearly dead and lying like a sacrifice, at the foot of a massive stone statue of Salazar Slytherin. Then, he observes a black-haired boy whom Harry recognizes as Tom Riddle. Riddle coolly reveals that he is the young Lord Voldemort; while a student at Hogwarts fifty years ago he changed his name to Voldemort and vowed to become the greatest Dark Wizard. He preserved himself as a memory in his own diary and now has become freed to be the rightful heir to Slytherin.

The cunning Riddle/Voldemort describes how lonely little Ginny, who found the diary well before Harry, poured out her heart and soul into its pages--and into Tom. He boasts how he was able to "charm" Ginny and her soul happened to be exactly what I wanted....I grew stronger and stronger on a diet of her deepest fears, her darkest secrets. I grew powerful, far more

powerful than little Miss Weasley. Powerful enough to start feeding Miss Weasley a few of my secrets, to start pouring a little of my soul back into her....[[She] daubed threatening messages on the walls. She set the Serpent of Slytherin on four Mudbloods....(p. 310)

In other words, this Hogwarts anima became possessed by a psychic vampire, to whom she gave the goodness of her young soul while he filled her with venomous hate, to become the poisonous soul of the psychological catastrophe currently haunting Hogwarts.

This penetrating description of psyche/soma possession and projection is one of the strongest and most chilling images in the book. It is both a vision and physical sensation of a terror to which both children and adults can relate. Ginny is the youngest sister of six brothers in the Weasley family. She was lonely and fearful about attending Hogwarts and used the secret Riddle diary to find desperately needed connection. Her soul was ideal "bait" for his hunger and his false responsiveness was seductive to her need to feel visible.

The mythic vampire can exist only by exploiting others--it is a parasitic beast that dies in isolation. The vampire archetype is essentially the shape we give to a dark potential in all human relations, an ominous shade that creeps over us when we feel (or imagine) the absence of love and settle for exploitation. (Barbara E. Hort, *Unholy Hungers: Encountering the Psychic Vampire in Ourselves & Others*, Boston, Shambhala, 1996, p. 33)

Having hid in the moldy diary for fifty years, Riddle's unlived life energy has distilled into pure Voldemort poison. The dark fury towards his abandoning Muggle father fueled his determination to retaliate against all Muggles. Unable to see his own self-hatred Riddle tells Harry that annihilating Mudbloods no longer interests him; he only wants to kill Harry.

Ginny and Harry, still inexperienced with recognizing and battling evil are not yet strong enough to fight it on their own. They need help. Unearthly music begins to flow into the Chamber, and, as it grows louder, Harry feels his heart expanding and hair rising on his head. Then he sees flames. A golden-beaked phoenix appears and flies to Harry. As its golden claws land on Harry's shoulder, he recognizes Dumbledore's pet, Fawkes. He is carrying the magical Sorting Hat. The arrival of the Hat augurs the imminence of yet another process of separating distinctions (the alchemical separatio.)

An infuriated Voldemort screams for the giant serpent to kill Harry. The terrified boy shuts his eyes as the phoenix dives at the serpent eyes, puncturing them with his golden beak. The red blood of death, giving Harry life, spurts everywhere. Thrashing blindly, the snake manages to bite Harry, impaling him with a poisonous fang. Amidst the turmoil, the serpent sweeps the Sorting Hat to Harry, a ruby-handled silver sword falls out, and Harry plunges it deeply into the reptile's mouth and kills it.

These images of the serpent suggest a penetrating visceral connection with the unconscious in its death dealing aspect. In killing the serpent, Harry is a hero able to transform the evil eye of the snake monster within, where monsters are created with "looks that kill." Though not yet fully revealed in

this story, Harry has internal mother images of the loving spirit of Lily Potter and the cruel stepmother, Petunia Dursley. In *Symbols of Transformation*, Jung wrote about the relationship between the mother imago, the unconscious, and the developing instinctual life of the son. In order not to fear life, the boy needs to deliver himself from his unconscious mother complex:

> The demands of the unconscious act at first like a paralyzing poison on a man's energy and resourcefulness, so that it may well be compared to the bite of a poisonous snake. Apparently, it is a hostile demon who robs him of his energy, but in actual fact it is his own unconscious whose alien tendencies are beginning to check the forward striving of the conscious mind. (Collected Works, Vol. 20, p. 298-299, par. 458)

As Harry pulls the fang from his arm, Fawkes flies to the adept who is rapidly becoming weaker from blood loss and spreading poison. The bird lays his head onto the wound and begins to cry thick tears. In alchemy and homeopathy there is a relationship between the poison that kills and the elixir that heals. The phoenix too, has a dual nature; it can be a killing force but its' empathic pearly tears can transform it to a healing remedy.

Young Voldemort begins a sarcastic eulogy for Harry but the youth regains consciousness. Fawkes flies to the diary and drops it into Harry's lap. As in killing a vampire, Harry grabs the serpent fang and plunges it into the heart of the diary. There is a piercing scream, ink spurts out of the diary, Voldemort writhes in agony on the floor, and once again disappears.

THE PROBLEM OF EVIL

Most of the Hogwarts community refer to Voldemort as "He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named." Voldemort, who has been trying to seize power for eons, is the personification of evil. The irreverent Harry, with Dumbledore's encouragement, keeps naming him while others shudder. Such an identification of him on the objective level is necessary to move Harry's connection with him out of the realm of participation mystique. To name means to separate, to halt the merger that occurs when there is a projection. Harry's rebellious attitude is not just an adolescent phase; it is critical in challenging the status quo. As the youth learns about his own power, he is able to withdraw his projections of power from Voldemort and locate his own.

The presence of the golden bird bearing the silver sword allows a new transcendent force to appear. The death, an alchemical mortificatio, of the serpent and then of Riddle/Voldemort, brings the young feminine back into the fullness of life. Little Ginny, whose soul is extracted back from the enigmatic sorcerer, emits a faint moan as she awakens and begins to cry. She says "I d-didn't mean to--R-Riddle made me, he t-took me over...." (*Chamber of Secrets*, p. 323).

Safely back, there is a postmortem of the events from the Chamber. Harry asks Professor Dumbledore to explain the meaning behind the Sorting Hat's statement from the first day at School when it said that Harry could have

done well in Slytherin or Gryffindor. He also wants to know why is he able to speak snake language, if it is the mark of a dark wizard. Dumbledore explains that when his mother died, Voldemort transferred some of his powers over to Harry. The youth worries that maybe he is of Slytherin, not Gryffindor. Dumbledore reminds him that in the sorting process, Harry asked the Hat: "Please don't put me in Slytherin." The Headmaster says that's what "makes you very different from Tom Riddle. It is our choices, Harry, that show what we truly are, far more than our abilities." (p. 333) He urges Harry to look more carefully at the ruby-studded silver sword handle: Godric Gryffindor, the name of the founder of his and his father's house, the rival of Slytherin, is engraved on the sword in his hands. Harry used his sword to separate from his shadowy projection.

In the *Anatomy of the Psyche*, Edward Edinger wrote:

> Psychologically, the result of separatio by division into two is awareness of the opposites. This is a crucial feature of emerging consciousness....To the extent that the opposites remain unconscious and unseparated, one lives in a state of participation mystique, which means that one identifies with one side of a pair of opposites and projects its contrary as an enemy. Space for consciousness to exist appears between the opposites, which means that one becomes conscious as one is able to contain and endure the opposites within. p. 187)

Harry will need a lifetime of training and support to use the blade wisely as a tool of discernment and discrimination. In Volume Three, Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban, Harry is thirteen and entering his third year at Hogwarts. This time he encounters still darker aspects of the archetypal and magical world. Sophisticated psychological concepts serve as carpets that move Harry and the reader into profound realms of emotional experience. His parents become more present in his consciousness.

As part of his development as a teenager and wizard, Harry's attitude becomes increasingly rebellious. He is "talking back" to the Dursleys, who say terrible things to him. Like many child abuse survivors, Harry has learned to cope with torturous mental treatment. Although often burning with rage, he tells himself not to respond and to stay focused on his goals. An aunt insults him via his dead mother with "You see it all the time with dogs. If there is something wrong with the bitch, there'll be something wrong with the pup--" (p. 25) But he can no longer keep body and mind split. He retaliates by making the relative inflate like a giant balloon. Then he runs away to Hogwarts.

FACE-TO-FACE WITH DEATH

Out on the street at night, Harry panics that he'll get expelled as punishment for performing magic as an underage wizard, away from Hogwarts. The threat of expulsion is always in the orphan's mind when he doesn't follow the established rules. As part of owning his authority, Harry is more drawn to obey inner values that are more compelling than any collective law. His anxiety is compounded when he senses a massive black dog-like creature watching him.

The dog in most mythologies is seen as psychopomp. Dogs are

intermediaries and "stand at the gateway....they are guardians between life and death, between known and unknown. They are an intuitive bridge between conscious and unconscious, connectors to the psychoid level of the psyche." (Woodman, *The Ravaged Bridegroom*, p. 195)

On his way back to Hogwarts, Harry learns that Sirius Black, an inmate at the Azkaban wizard prison and purported supporter of Voldemort has escaped. Black had once been a Hogwarts student and best friend of Harry's dad. The wizard community fears that Black went insane in prison and is hunting Harry to kill him. The Minister of Magic arranges to have the Azkaban prison guards, called "Dementors," stationed outside of the School gates to watch for Black. The Dementors appear as giant, rotted, black-cloaked figures. They are among the foulest creatures that walk this earth. They infest the darkest, filthiest places, they glory in decay and despair, they drain peace, hope, and happiness out of the air around them....Get too near a dementor and every good feeling, every happy memory will be sucked out of you. If it can, the dementor will feed on you long enough to reduce you to something like itself...soul-less and evil. (p. 187)

The Dementors are magnetically attracted to positive emotions, like starving beasts after their prey. These hellish embodiments of evil overwhelm and dissociate their victims and then, reminiscent of vampire lore, they deliver the final "kiss."

Harry has a strong physical reaction to his first encounter with a Dementor on the Hogwarts Express. He collapses to the floor, feels as though he is drowning in swirling icy water, and blacks out while hearing screams inside his mind. Professor Remus Lupin, the new Defense against the Dark Arts instructor, is in the same train compartment and performs a curse against the soul-stealing dementors. Like the garlic that wards off the vampire, the professor gives Harry the remedy, chocolate (!), which rebalances his body.

Each time he is near a Dementor, the effect is more disabling. The next meeting occurs during a Quidditch match when, from his broomstick, he sees a giant silhouette of a dog on a cloud. He then sees a mass of nearly a hundred Dementors below on the Quidditch field. Again the frigid drowning sensation, but now it is accompanied by hearing his mother's screams. "Not Harry, please no, take me, kill me instead..." (p. 179) He faints, falls off his Nimbus 2000, and lands on the ground. Some force bigger than Harry brought him down.

The image of the black dog on the cloud could be viewed as a projection of Harry's fears of failure, abandonment and death. The early childhood trauma is playing back in his mind and bewitching tyrannical forces entrance him from within. Lying in the infirmary, Harry can't understand his reaction to the Dementors. He feels crazy and alone with his thoughts. He cannot grasp why he was hearing the last moments of his mother's life and Lord Voldemort's laughter before he murdered her. Like night vapors, horrible dream images seep into his sleep.

Lupin explains that Dementor energy can possess a person, and it effects Harry profoundly, not because of a weakness, but because those with a greater history of trauma are more susceptible. "And the worst has happened to you, Harry, [and] is enough to make anyone fall off their

broom. You have nothing to feel ashamed of." (p. 187)

Because of the Sirius Black danger Harry is not permitted to leave Hogwarts to go on a school trip. He feels isolated. Friends sneak him a magical "Marauders Map," designed long ago by former students "Messrs. Mooney, Wormtail, Padfoot, and Prongs, Purveyors of Aids to Magical Mischief Makers," so he can sneak away from School for an outing. In true daredevil adolescent style, Harry can't worry about danger when adventure calls.

Successful in his escapade, he catches up with Ron and Hermione, and they eavesdrop on Hogwarts faculty gossip. The teachers suspect Black went over to the Dark Side and sacrificed the Potters as proof of his loyalty to Voldemort. The faculty fear that although Voldemort is weak, with his most ardent supporter he could rise again.

Harry is shaken by the news. Feeling conflicted by his desire to hear his parents voices when he falls into the trauma bewitchment and his simultaneous need to survive, he knows that when seized by dementor energy he teeters on the edge of madness and death. He needs to become empowered to save his life. Lupin agrees to mentor Harry. First he will practice by using a "boggart." A boggart, explains Hermione, is "a shape-shifter....It can take the shape of whatever it thinks will frighten us the most..." (p. 133) It is an embodiment of terror, yet powerless. The Charm that counters a boggart is a concentrated humorous feeling that must be as strong as the fear, in order to transform the negative energy. As in a homeopathic visualization, the victim of the boggart must imagine himself in a paradoxical situation, in order to dissipate the energy.

Next, Harry must learn the most powerful Dark Arts Defense against the dementor, the Patronus Charm. It calls for his full concentration to find his authoritive standpoint. The Charm conjures up a Patronus...which is kind of an anti-dementor--a guardian that acts as a shield between you and the dementor.... a positive force, a projection of the very things that the dementor feeds upon--hope, happiness, the desire to survive--but it cannot feel despair, as real human can, so the dementors can't hurt it. (p.237) He utters the charm and on the third try, an important number in fairy tales, he succeeds in stopping the takeover of his spirit.

Harry, Hermione, and Ron finally meet up with Sirius Black who tells them who it was that really killed James and Lily Potter. Sirius, also the name for the "dog star," becomes a source of light and insight about the death of the royal couple. But it's too late.

> The Dementors start closing in. Harry musters up a Patronus Charm to ward them off but lacks the power to repel the herd of one hundred. As something begins to encircle him, miraculously the cold wave begins to leave his body. Harry sees an animal, glowing in the moonlight. He screwed up his eyes, trying to see what it was. It looked like a horse. It was galloping silently away from him, across the black surface of the lake. He saw it lower its head and charge the swarming dementors.... They were gone. The Patronus turned. It was cantering back towards Harry....It was a stag....Its hooves made no mark on the soft ground as it stared at Harry with its